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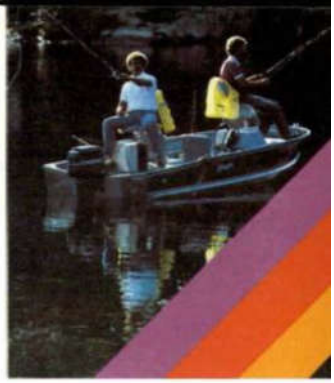
Canada's Chinese Columbus: Ahead by 1,000 Years

Voyage of the 'Discovery' 1911 * Paintings by Cardinal



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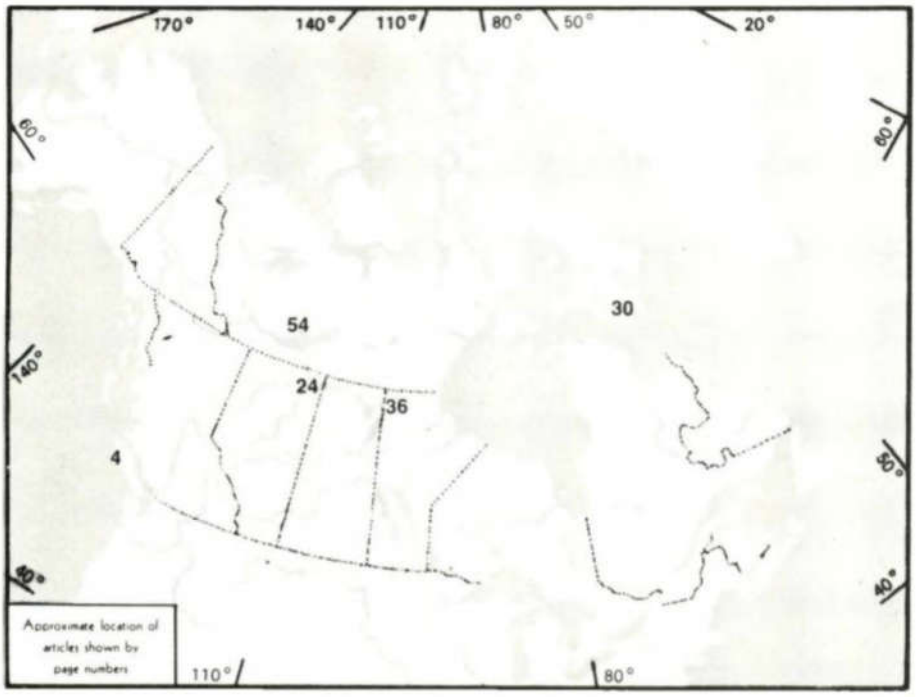

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COVER: 'Crazy Quilt', by Don Cardinal. Acrylic on canvas, 24" x 20". From the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre Collection, Department of Justice and Public Services, Yellowknife, N.W.T. Photograph by Alan Booth.

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Canada's Chinese Columbus

By Peter Caley

How many times before Columbus did travellers from the Orient reach North America?
The story of Hwui Shan who sailed across the Pacific with four Buddhist monks in A.D. 458 and returned to tell his tale to the Emperor has been a fascinating and controversial subject for more than two centuries.

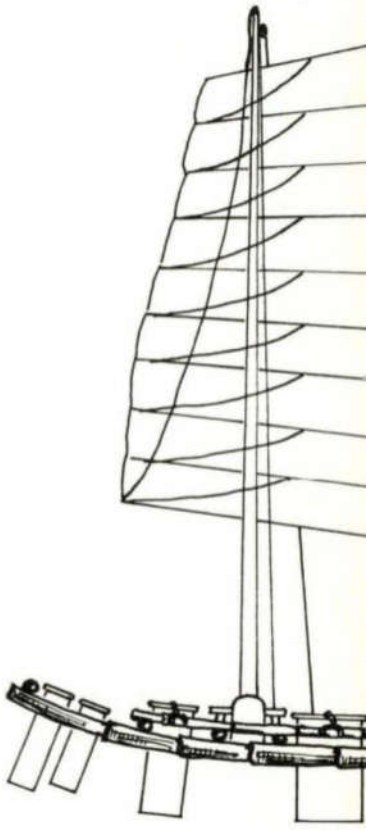
Peter Caley, naval historian, editor and former marine, has written articles, and nautical documentaries for both the Canadian and British Broadcasting Corporations.

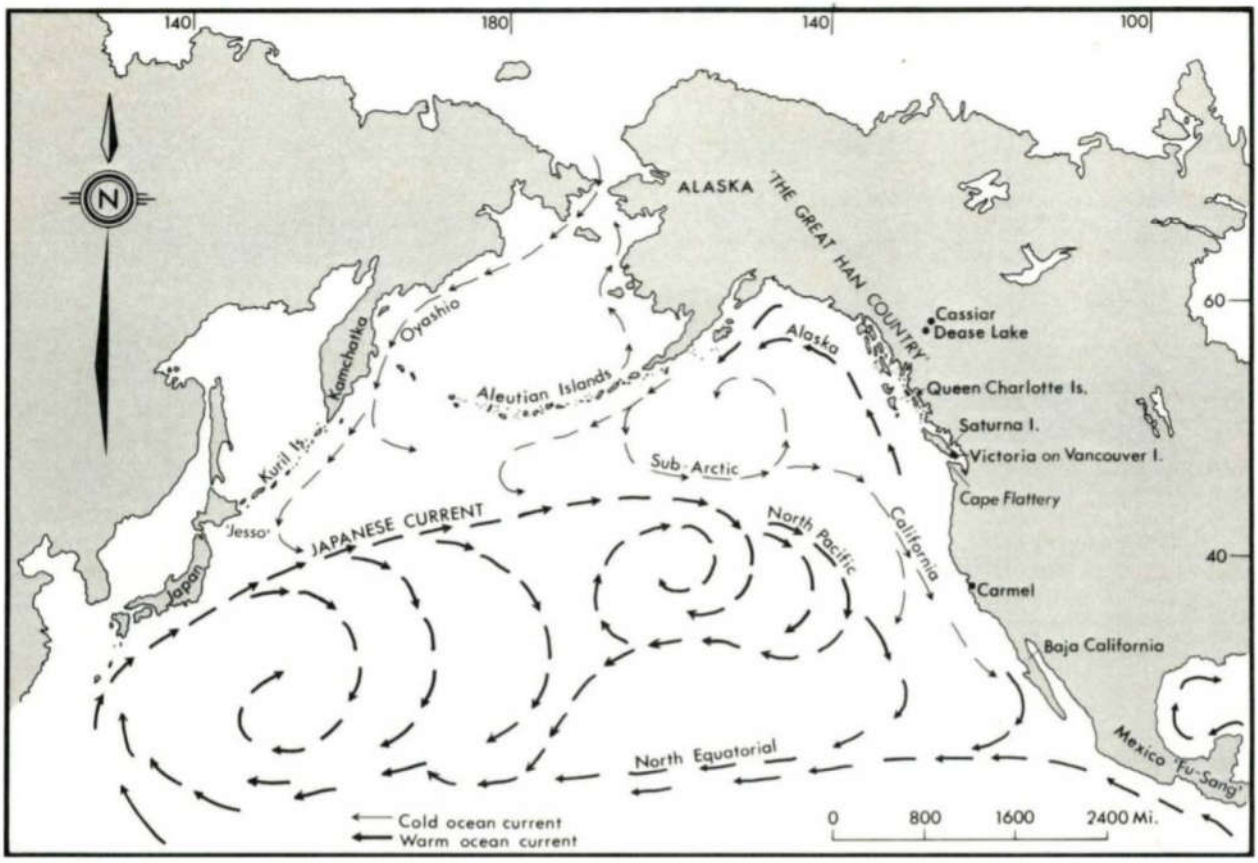
Sketch of a centuries-old sailing raft of giant bamboo, still in use on China's more turbulent rivers. With a three-man crew it carries seven tons while drawing only six inches with daggerboards retracted. The ancient sea-going craft would have had one or more deck-houses and possibly a second mast.

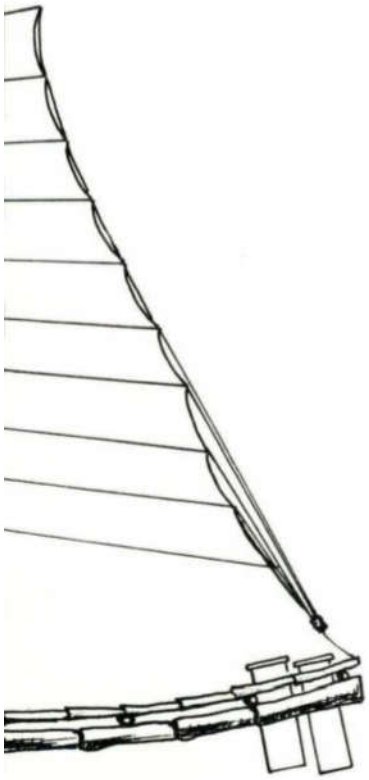
FIVE HUNDRED YEARS before Columbus stumbled upon the West Indies and thought himself to be in Asia, Vikings from Greenland had discovered Canada and established a settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. But were the Vikings really our first overseas visitors? There is reason to believe that they were not, and that Chinese missionaries were here 542 years before them.

An account of their visit came to light in 1761, when the French sinologist Joseph de Guignes undertook a study and translation of ancient Chinese documents. He was startled to find a report of Buddhist priests travelling across the 'Great Eastern Sea' in A.D. 458.

According to de Guignes and later translators, the report told of an Afghan priest, Hwui Shan, who went to China as a very young man in A.D. 450. Eight years later, accompanied by four other Buddhist monks, he left China on a 'northeast' course and visited 'Jesso', an ancient name for Japan's most northerly island. Continuing on the same course, the group followed the Kurile Islands to Kamchatka, known to the Chinese since 300 B.C. and partly under their control. It would have been an easy passage, rarely out of sight of land for more than a few hours, and would become even easier when they followed the close-grouped Aleutian Islands which lead







Drawing by Elaine B. Caley

like a sign-post to present-day Alaska and British Columbia, then frequently visited by the Aleuts in their skin canoes.

In his account Hwui Shan had an infuriating habit of commenting only on what was new or strange to him. Accordingly, he made no mention of the type of vessel in which he sailed, and thus it becomes necessary to digress for a moment. By the fifth century A. D., China was a thousand years ahead of Europe in civil engineering, naval architecture, astronomy and navigation. Indeed, their mariners were discussing magnetic declination before Europe had even heard of the compass needle, and their warriors were armed with the cross-bow when we were still knocking each other on the head. And so, by Hwui Shan's time, their ships already had battened sails, watertight compartments, lee-boards, a balanced rudder and the lodestone to aid them in their fantastic ocean voyages. By the second century they were on the coast of India. By the fourth they were trading on the coast of East Africa and may well have rounded the Cape of Good Hope. By the seventh century they had reached Australia, and although the Chinese junk may appear cumbersome and clumsy in its above-water lines, it was actually the safest and most efficient ship in the history of sail.

Hwui Shan noted that the 'residence of the kings is adorned...with beautiful objects about the dwellings'. His comment is supported by this sketch of a Kwakiutl village on Vancouver Island, taken on the spot by J. Sykes in 1792 and published in Captain G. Vancouver's 'Voyage of Discovery'.

Hwui Shan and his party may well have sailed on one of the smaller ocean-going junks of that time, but it is unlikely that five men could handle the multiple sheets of the Chinese rig, although its sails could be instantly reefed without the need for anyone to climb aloft. More likely, they would have used the sea-going sailing-raft that other Buddhists of their time were using for pilgrimages to India and Ceylon. These rafts were built of the giant bamboo which reaches a height of eighty feet and a diameter of one foot. Usually formed of eleven such logs, they were curved upwards at both ends by means of heat. On the rivers of China today, such a raft can carry a cargo of seven tons at a draft of only three to six inches, and have up to six retractable daggerboards to combat leeway. The rafts are virtually unsinkable, free from waterlogging, and each log is provided by nature with waterproof compartments.

The route that the monks took cannot be doubted. Laying a northeasterly course they would have had the powerful aid of the Japanese Current and prevailing winds that sweep like a conveyor belt from Japan to Northwest America, forces that to this day carry Oriental glass fishing floats to the west coast of Vancouver Island. But a direct easterly crossing of the Pacific is not possible for a sailing ship, since both wind and current would be against it.

In his report, Hwui Shan correctly placed the Aleutian Islands as being '7000 *Li* [2,333 miles] or more to the north of Japan.' That would place him at the centre of the island chain, which he called 'The Country of Marked Bodies', saying, 'Its people have marks on their bodies like those of wild beasts. Upon the foreheads they have three marks. If the marks are large and straight, they indicate those of the higher classes; but if they are small and crooked they are of the lower classes.' More than 1,300 years later, Captain James Cook visited the Aleuts and noted the same painted stripes, as did later explorers.

Continuing east, the Buddhists reached mainland America, where they met the natives of Alaska and British Columbia. This they called 'The Great Han country', which has been variously translated as 'The Great Land' and 'Great Land of Rushing Waters' — an apt description of the territory. According to Hwui Shan, 'Great Han is 5000 *Li* [1,666 miles] to the east of the Marked Bodies', and again he was reasonably correct. Of the coastal Indians, he said 'The rudeness of their customs is the same as the people of Marked Bodies', and correctly added 'but the words of their language are different'.

In all other respects he lumped the two peoples together by saying, 'The people of the land are of a merry nature and rejoice when they have an abundance, even of

Royal Ontario Museum

Lohan, a monk disciple of the Buddha. A twelfth-century pottery figure, lead-silicate glazed, supported with rods of iron. Reported to have been found with a group of such figures in a cave south of Peking. A gift of Mrs H.D. Warren to the Royal Ontario Museum. An ancient figure in the same classical style was found in Mexico in the late 1930s.

McCord Museum

'Indians gathering Shellfish'. A water-colour by W.G.R. Hind c.1865. As apparent in this painting the West Coast Indians wore hats (as distinct from headdresses), similar in shape to those worn by Chinese coolies.

articles that are of little value. Travelling visitors do not prepare food for their journeys and they have the shelter of the (inhabitants') dwellings. They have no fortifications or walled cities. The residence of the kings is adorned . . . with beautiful objects [totem poles?] about the dwellings. They make a ditch which is filled with water-silver (ice) and the rain flows over the water-silver.' As a visitor from war-torn China, he was surprised to find that the natives had no military weapons and did not seem to make war on each other.

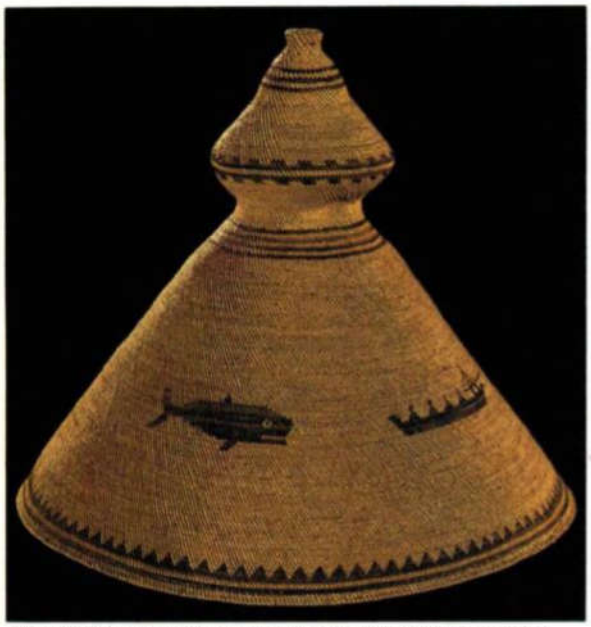
From his report, it does not appear that Hwui Shan and his fellows had any intention of remaining in North-west America. Perhaps they considered the natives to be unworthy of their Buddhist teachings, having noted 'the rudeness of their customs' but, whatever the reason, they apparently spent little time there before turning south for Mexico, which they named Fu-Sang. Strangely, it is almost as if they knew exactly where they were going.

Hwui Shan placed Mexico as being 20,000 *Li* (6,666 miles) east of China, a fairly good estimate if, as is now thought, his first landfall was Baja California. Of Mexico he said, 'That region has many Fu-Sang trees and it is from these trees that it derives its name. The first sprouts are like those of the bamboo. The people of the country eat them, and they have a fruit like a pear but of a reddish colour. They spin thread from the bark, from which they make cloth, of which they make clothing. They also manufacture a finer fabric from it. They have literary characters and make paper from the Fu-Sang.'

After a great deal of bickering among botanists, it is now generally agreed that the monk was describing the maguey (American Aloe). Paper is made from its leaves even today. The sap makes an intoxicating drink, its large leaves are used to roof houses and the fibres make thread, cordage and a rough cloth. The thorns were once used as needles and pins.

Hwui Shan was deeply impressed by the existing civilization he found in the land of Fu-Sang, reporting that 'The king of the country, when he walks abroad, is preceded and followed with drums and horns. The colour of his garment is changed with the mutation of the years.' He went on to describe each of these many changes, ranging from blue to black.

'The people have horse carts, cattle carts and deer carts' he wrote. For a long time this statement was ridiculed by modern scholars, who claimed that the wheel was unknown in Mexico until the coming of the Spaniards. But recently, ceramic toys were unearthed in the Yucatan — and they were mounted on wheels. It is also claimed that the Spaniards first introduced the horse



British Columbia Provincial Museum

Up until the nineteenth century the hat of the Chinese mariner was topped with a globular projection, as is this whaling hat of a Nootka chief.

Campbell & Chipman, Winnipeg

Oriental glass fishing floats carried across the ocean to the west coast of British Columbia by the Japanese Current and prevailing winds. These were collected in the Queen Charlotte Islands by George Whitman.

to America, but the bones of a miniature prehistoric horse have since been discovered.

The monk found it astonishing that 'the people of the country raise deer as cattle are raised in China. From milk they make a koumiss.' This fermented drink was something new to him, for dairy products were not used in China until modern times, when ice cream was introduced. Equally strange was the fact that 'the people have no iron. Gold and silver are not valued, and in their markets there are no taxes or fixed prices.'

He stated that war and human sacrifices were unknown in prehistoric Mexico, a fact since confirmed by modern archaeologists. These were to come centuries later when the conquering Aztecs swept the gentle Maya and Toltec from the land, taking over their pyramids and temples, until they in turn were massacred by the Spanish. Hwui Shan gave a very full report on fifth-century Mexico, its people, their dress, laws, customs and industries, and his descriptions of the country's flora and fauna prove that he could have been in no other country but Mexico.

According to translations of the official *Liang Shu,* Hwui Shan became separated from his companions during his forty-year stay in Fu-Sang, and returned alone to China as a very old man in A.D. 499, only to find the nation ripped apart by civil wars, and Buddhism no longer in favour. Three years later he was called before the Imperial Court to relate his story to the new Emperor, Wu-Ti, himself a Buddhist, to whom he presented an obsidian mirror and a sample of cloth from the Fu-Sang tree. He was examined and cross-examined by the learned princes of the court before his story was accepted and entered in the history of the new dynasty.

Hwui Shan's report was not helped by the fact that, as an Afghan, he spoke Chinese imperfectly. It is also unfortunate that the history of ancient China has been twice condensed and many times edited. There are those of his detractors who have pointed out that he made some extravagant claims, such as his mention of a 'Kingdom of Women' to the east of Fu-Sang. But the monk did not claim that he had seen it. The words he used were 'It is said. . .' In fairness, it must be remembered that Marco Polo also made some strange claims, but it is not denied that he travelled in China.

With his studies completed, de Guignes presented a paper before the French Academy of Science in 1761, and there was no one who doubted its truth. This was all the more impressive because in those days, knowledge of North Pacific geography and oceanography was confined to educated guesses, and the existence of the Japanese Current and its value in later sailing routes was totally unsuspected.

The de Guignes hypothesis remained unchallenged for seventy years, when, in 1831, Julius Klaproth became enraged that a French sinologist would upstage a Prussian one. He attacked de Guignes's translation. The

Chinese could not count, he claimed, so how could they measure distance? But the academy possessed another document which disputed that statement — and it had been written by Klaproth. Ranting on, he accused the Chinese of not knowing south from east. The academy's answer was to produce another document showing (inaccurately) that the Chinese had invented the compass in 1100 B.C., and that document was also written by Klaproth. As a result, a storm arose amongst the scholars of that time, in which Klaproth could find only two supporters while all others of his contemporaries opposed his reasoning, even to the point of publicly questioning his scientific integrity. But the damage had been done, and by the start of World War I the Hwui Shan controversy had died from sheer lack of evidence.

It is unfortunate that while in Alaska and British Columbia the priest did not stay long enough to inscribe a Chinese version of 'Kilroy was here'. Regardless, our West Coast Indians have a legend of foreign visitors who arrived by sea many generations before the arrival of Captain Cook. These they called 'The Eaters of Maggots' — and so it might appear to a people who had never seen rice. And it is remarkable that these same Canadian Indians were the only ones who wore a hat, as distinct from a headdress. It cannot be mere coincidence that its woven shape is similar to that worn by Chinese coolies and that it is topped with a globular projection resembling that which surmounted the coolie hat of Chinese mariners up to the nineteenth century.

British Columbia's professional archaeology is still in its infancy, particularly on the west coast where little was done before 1966, and it has produced no concrete evidence of Hwui Shan's visit. There have been, however, some remarkable discoveries by laymen. One such find was reported in the Victoria *Colonist* of 2 February 1968. It had been made twelve years previously on Saturna, one of the province's Gulf Islands, when a young boy discovered a shard of earthenware in the shape of a human head. The jaw was missing but the newspaper described it as having 'very slanty eyes and a tuft of hair on the head.' It was taken to the Provincial Museum 'but aroused little interest at the time', until spotted by archaeologist Don Abbot who was well aware that the Indians of British Columbia did not fire clay. He consulted the British Museum, which supported his belief that it was of Oriental origin dating back to 'about A.D. 300'.

In 1890, police questioned a band of nomadic Indians near Dease Lake, in northern British Columbia. They had in their possession a number of what seemed to be bronze ceremonial dishes which they said were found buried at the foot of a tree. They refused to part with them but agreed to surrender a bronze medallion. This was sent to Victoria and identified as of Buddhist origin. Regrettably, it was not dated and its present whereabouts is unknown.

These two finds could well relate to Hwui Shan and his party, but there have been other discoveries which, in their time, caused some excitement. The Victoria *Colonist* of 25 October 1882, carried an article headed, 'Were Chinese Here 3000 Years Ago?' It reported that a group of miners digging a drift near Cassiar, northern British Columbia made 'a remarkable discovery. At a depth of several feet they found about thirty brass coins that have passed current in China for many centuries. They were strung on what appeared to be an iron wire. This went to dust a few minutes after it was exposed, but the coins appeared as bright as when they left the celestial mint and . . . bear a date of about twelve hundred years B.C.' The article ends, 'One would not be surprised at any time to hear of yet more startling evidence of the presence of Chinese on this coast before the coming of the whites.'

If the dating of 1200 B.C. was accurate, it would have been long before the time of Hwui Shan, although it would have supported the story of his journey 1,600 years later. But such dating must be seriously doubted, since even the Chinese were not making ocean voyages 3,000 years ago. Later discoveries of ancient Chinese coins found in the province prove only that someone lost them, but when and who, we shall never know.

More significant are the existing records of derelict junks washed ashore on the continent's Pacific shores in historic times, dating from the Spanish Conquest and averaging one every five years. Until the coming of the white man, these provided the coastal Indians of Northwest America with their only supply of iron and copper, which they themselves had not learned to smelt. Obviously, such wrecks would also have occurred during the centuries of travel from the Orient preceding Columbus.

To the south, a junk was cast ashore at Carmel, California, in 1774. To the north, a junk was wrecked on the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1832, and those who survived the disaster did not survive the Indians.

Another junk struck the rocks near Cape Flattery during the winter of 1833, and in this one the Hudson's Bay Company became involved. Later in the following year the wreck came to the knowledge of Chief Factor Doctor John McLoughlin, of Fort Vancouver, in the Oregon Territory. In a letter to the Company, dated 18 November 1834, he described the vessel as having left Japan with 'a cargo of Rice nankeens and porcelain ware.' The ship was struck by a typhoon in which she was dismasted and lost her rudder. She then drifted for almost a year in the Japanese Current before being cast ashore. McLoughlin reported that 'of the crew of fourteen men only three were saved and redeemed from the Indians.' He had dispatched the Hudson's Bay Company ship *Lama* to obtain their ransom and, in his letter to the Company, suggested it would be in the interests of Britain and the Company to return the survivors to Japan as a gesture of good will and with a view to possibly opening up trade.

This the Company undertook, but the Japanese were strongly opposed to foreign traders and not too keen on accepting their own shipwrecked nationals. The mercy ship was thrice driven off by gunfire and its captain took the hint, leaving his passengers in China.

More recently, on 5 December 1926, the Japanese fishing schooner *Riyo Yei Maru* left its home port and was not seen again until a year later, when it was found adrift a few miles south of Victoria. Two bodies were found aboard, ten were missing and there was evidence of cannibalism. All such wrecks emphasize the strength and constancy of the Japanese Current and serve to suggest that a discovery of the American continent by sailors from the Orient, intentional or unintentional, was not only possible but inevitable.

By the late 1930s, Mexico turned to intensive archaeological excavations, unearthing sculptures of obvious Oriental influence, including a figure sitting in the classical cross-legged style of the Buddha. Other fifth-century sculptures bear typical Buddhist motifs. Prehistoric architecture also bears signs of Chinese culture; a corbelled roof and arch dated to A.D. 475 arrived apparently without any evolutionary development, and to the present time houses are roofed with the same system of convex and concave tiles used in China for countless centuries.

The evidence mounts, but Hwui Shan has left us with a few questions that may never be answered. How did he return to China? At his advanced age, it is unlikely that he made his way back to Alaska on foot, to then take an Aleutian canoe back to the Chinese outposts on Kamchatka. Did he build another sailing-raft, or had he retained the original one, since a westerly crossing in that latitude would receive favourable winds?

In the present century, the subject lives on. A renowned historian, the late Charles E. Chapmen, gave the subject deep consideration. In a lecture at the University of California he concluded, 'Either Fu-Sang was in America. . .or the [Hwui Shan] story was a lie. The evidence that it was not is almost overwhelming.'

On the other hand, the British sinologist Joseph Needham questions the Hwui Shan story in his great work, *Science and Civilization in China,* Volume 4 (Cambridge University Press, 1971). But he bases his doubt almost entirely on his distrust of de Guignes, calling him the *enfant terrible* of sinology. Yet at no time does Needham dispute the certainty of Oriental influence on the Amerindian cultures of mid-America and 'the arrival from time to time of small groups of men and women with a background of high culture, but never any massive invasion like that of the Europeans', noting that all such influence is confined to the Pacific Coast.

As examples, he cites the Mexican terraces and the monumental staircases of the temples, the sky-dragon motifs, the drums, tripod pottery, terra-cotta figures, and

Bronze ceremonial dishes, a bronze medallion identified as Buddhist, an earthenware shard considered to be of Oriental origin and to date back to about A.D. 300 — all reported found in British Columbia.

Archaeology Division, B.C. Provincial Museum

Photographs and a cast of the earthenware shard found on Saturna Island are still held by the Provincial Museum of British Columbia. The original shard (above) was reclaimed, by its discoverer.

even paintings. On both sides of the Pacific, jade beads were placed in the mouth of the dead, and jade corpse-amulets were painted with the life-giving colour of red cinnabar.

Who really discovered Canada? Certainly Leif Ericsson has a proven claim, making Columbus something of a late-comer on the rest of the continent. But European conceit dictates that any discovery of America must have been a trans-Atlantic one, so that today we have writers and even a few historians propounding the most outlandish theories. America, they say, was discovered by the Romans, the Phoenicians, the Jews, the Irish, African negroes and even gods from outer space. We would be wiser to turn our eyes to the Pacific, from whence Oriental castaways and others had been discovering America with monotonous regularity. ◆

Voyage of the 'DISCOVERY' 1911

By A.R. Williamson

Able Seaman A.R. Williamson, aboard the 'Dechmont', at Melbourne, Australia in 1910.

Captain Williamson, now 91 and living in Sussex, England, is the only person alive today who could have written this detailed and rousing account of the voyage of the Auxiliary Barque 'Discovery'. He refreshed his excellent memory by studying copies of the ship's log-books from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. Following service in World War I, Captain Williamson D.S.O., O.B.E., signed on with the Indo-China Steam Company in the Far East. He commanded vessels on the Yangtze River and, in 1931, was appointed Marine Superintendent in Shanghai. He retired in 1946.

EARLY IN JUNE 1911, I proceeded to the West India Dock seeking employment as an able seaman. I was almost twenty years of age and had served nearly five years at sea which qualified me to take the Board of Trade examination for second mate. Being without sufficient funds to meet the expenses (there being no unemployment pay or state assistance in those days) it was necessary to make another voyage to provide a sufficient sum at the paying-off table to cover fees and maintenance ashore for a period of study with examination to follow.

It was therefore my intention to ship in another square-rigged ship for a deep-water voyage around the world. By chance the first square-rigged vessel I came to in the export dock was, to a seaman's eye, an odd-looking craft — a wooden vessel, barque-rigged with a funnel abaft the mainmast. Although I had not seen her previously I knew her by repute and realized at once that it was the Hudson's Bay Company ship *Discovery* being prepared for her annual voyage to Hudson Bay. Riggers were working aloft and cargo was being loaded. The sailing date was therefore close at hand.

This was a ship bound on an unusual voyage which would be adventurous and at its end would provide a sufficient wage packet to meet my needs. I went no further. I hurried on board. The second mate was beside the main hatch talking to the stevedore and he looked at me enquiringly as I approached. 'Has the full crew been engaged yet, sir?' I asked. He looked me over and replied 'Not yet — looking for a ship?' I said that I was doing so and handed him my seaman's discharge book. He glanced through it, asked a question about my sail experience, dropped the book into his pocket and told me to consider myself engaged as able seaman. He then ordered me to report on board the following Monday when the master would inspect the deck crew before the Articles of Agreement were signed.

On the day appointed I joined my future shipmates on board where we were met by Captain John Ford — a bearded, stocky gentleman. Having satisfied himself that we were all young and fit he pointed out that at the posts in Hudson Bay to which we were bound there were no port facilities; therefore the deck crew was expected to discharge and load cargo whenever required. He also stated that as the Bay was still largely unsurveyed and

subject to subarctic weather, the ship could become involved in hazardous situations and in the event of disaster and the ship having to be abandoned the crew had to agree to work ashore, obey the orders of the master and officers and to preserve ship discipline at all times, whether afloat or ashore. We would therefore be required to sign special clauses in the Articles of Agreement to cover the special nature and hazards of the voyage. Having signified our willingness to sign these clauses Captain Ford informed us that the Articles would be signed in the Board of Trade offices on Dock Street, near the Tower, at 10 a.m. the following Thursday and that the ship would sail on Saturday afternoon. He also warned us to take all the warm clothing necessary for subarctic weather. We then dispersed to prepare ourselves and our kits for sea.

At that time trouble was brewing in the shipping world. The seamen's organizations had been pressing for wages to be increased by £1 per month above the standard rates, then ruling in steamers, of £4-10 for seamen and £5-10 for firemen. The ship owners refused to make any concession whatever and the Seamen's Union declared a strike to commence on Thursday, 15 June 1911, the day on which the *Discovery* Articles were to be signed.

When I arrived at Dock Street that morning I found a considerable number of seamen and firemen being harangued by union officials instructing them, with menacing gestures, to demand £1 per month above the standard rates and not to sign on for less. I made my way to the Board of Trade offices and on the notice board saw the first name was that of a steamer, followed by the Auxiliary Barque *Discovery*. When all my prospective shipmates had assembled we hurriedly discussed our position. The standard rate for an able seaman on a sailing ship was £3 per month and the *Discovery* was essentially a sailing vessel, although fitted with an engine for use in emergencies. Another factor was that the Hudson's Bay Company paid an able seaman £3-10 per month, 10 shillings more than the standard rate for a square rigger. If we refused to sign for the wage offered and the Company refused to pay more, we would have lost not only employment but the opportunity of making a Hudson Bay voyage. Therefore, when we were stopped at the entrance to the shipping office by a union official and ordered not to sign for less than the increased rate we asked him what the rate was for a sailing ship. This query took him flat aback and he had to consult with his colleagues, as steamers had been legislated for and the fact that a sailing ship might be signing Articles that day had been overlooked. After a hurried discussion it was agreed that *Discovery* must be treated as a sailing ship and that, as the Company paid 10 shillings more than the standard 'windjammer' rate, we could sign for that amount if the Hudson's Bay Company refused to pay more. This decision having been reached and Gordon, the biggest man among us, told off to be spokesman, we trooped into the shipping office and congregated at one end of a long counter at the further end of which the shipping master was reading the Articles of Agreement to a steamer crew.

...to the seaman's eye, an odd-looking craft — a wooden vessel, barque-rigged with a funnel abaft the mainmast.

Facing us across the counter Captain Ford listened attentively to the adjacent proceedings and eyed us speculatively. We heard the shipping master read all the clauses of the articles but when he recited the wages to be paid, a spokesman stopped him and said they could not sign for less than £5-10 for able seamen and £6-10 for firemen. The master said he had instructions to pay no more than the standard wages whereupon all the bold mariners facing him turned and walked out. The shipping master then came to deal with us, opened out the *Discovery* Articles and read them until he recited the wages to be paid. Gordon then stopped him and quite politely mentioned the strike being declared for a £1 increase and we could not sign for less. Captain Ford immediately replied that the *Discovery* was not bound on an ordinary commercial voyage, her employment was of a very special nature and it was essential that her sailing should not be delayed; otherwise she might be caught in the ice and prevented from returning that season. Therefore, on his own responsibility he offered us an extra 10 shillings per month. Thereupon we retired from the counter and after a brief discussion we decided to ask for the full £1 extra but, if the Company refused to pay it, we would sign for the extra ten shillings. Back at the counter Gordon thanked the captain for his offer but said we must stand by our demand for the full £1 extra. Captain Ford then retired to consult his owners by telephone. He soon returned, nodded to the shipping master and gave us the gratifying news that the Company had agreed that the monthly rate should be £4-10 for able seamen and £6-10 for firemen. The shipping master thereupon completed reading the Articles with the special clauses added, the revised rates of pay and the order to be on board at noon on the following Saturday. Stepping forward in turn we signed the Articles and received the customary note for half a month's advance of wages to be paid to one's nominee three days after the ship had sailed. On emerging from the shipping office and announcing that we had succeeded in getting an extra £1 per month we were greeted as heroes and the first

. . . a fine fresh northerly breeze and we were rolling along on our westerly course with every stitch of canvas set and drawing taut full.

victory for the union was celebrated in the nearest pub.

During the forenoon of Saturday, the newly engaged members of the *Discovery* crew, having settled their shore affairs and made their adieux, proceeded, sea-bag on shoulder and small case in hand (often containing all their worldly goods) down the West India Dock Road. Their final shore transaction was to call at a ship-chandler's shop outside the dock gates and purchase a straw-filled mattress and pillow (in sea jargon a 'donkey's breakfast') to be delivered on board before noon. On board, the forecastle was a scene of cheerful confusion as bags were partially unpacked and we changed from shore clothes into sea-going working rig. In due course the ship-chandler's boy, pushing a hand barrow, arrived alongside to deliver the mattresses which were temporarily piled into bunks. By the appointed hour of 12 noon we were ready for duty; eight bells were struck; Mr Hayward, the second mate, appeared at the door of the forecastle and ordered 'Turn to, lads'; and with that command the Articles of Agreement came into force, and the voyage officially began. We were under ship's discipline once more. On deck we were mustered by a Board of Trade official who checked us off against the list of men who had signed the Articles and it was discovered that a young Danish seaman had failed to join. He did not turn up and we sailed without him, for as the barque was fully manned to Board of Trade requirements there was no reason to ship a substitute. After the official muster the two mates proceeded to 'pick the watches' by each choosing a man in turn. I was chosen by the second mate and thus became a member of the starboard watch under him for the whole voyage. Soon after the watches had been picked we were ordered to mooring stations — the port watch under Mr Redfearn, first mate, on the forecastle head; and the starboard watch aft under Mr Hayward, second mate. The dock tugs now made fast and with a dock pilot in charge the barque was unmoored and towed to a berth adjacent to the dock entrance to await high water and to raise a full head of steam.

At this juncture Captain Ford joined his ship accompanied by members of the Hudson's Bay Company bringing the ship's documents and the official clearance papers permitting the *Discovery* to proceed on her voyage.

All hands now went to dinner — our first meal on board. There were six bunks in two tiers on each side of the forecastle with a hinged seat locker for the occupant of each bunk arranged beside the lower tier. We had now been divided into the customary two watches and after the meal was over the starboard watch took possession of the starboard bunks and the port watch installed themselves on the port side. Each man spread his mattress and blankets in his chosen bunk and by the time the meal hour expired our simple sleeping arrangements were complete.

At 3 p.m. the visitors went ashore, the gangway was landed and when the dock gates were opened the barque was warped through the lock and, with a river pilot in charge, she steamed into mid-stream, turned and proceeded on her voyage. During the run down river the sailors were employed overhauling the running rigging to make sure that the riggers had correctly rove off all the buntlines, clewlines and so on, and had made them fast to their correct belaying pins. At 6:45 p.m. we arrived off Gravesend and anchored in the powder ground, the area in which ships loading or discharging dangerous cargoes are segregated from the rest of the shipping. A consignment of explosives and ammunition destined for Hudson Bay was brought alongside in a lighter and, under customs supervision, it was loaded into the temporary magazine in the main hatch after the general cargo had been loaded. Loading of the dangerous cargo was completed by 9 p.m., the hatches were replaced, the tarpaulins spread and securely battened down. Anchor watches were set to await high water before proceeding on our voyage. The *Discovery* was fully loaded and was, in nautical parlance, 'in all respects ready for sea'. Her draught of water was 16'10" forward, 18'10" aft. At 3:30 a.m. on Sunday, 18 June, the anchor was weighed with the first of the ebb and, with a sea pilot in charge, we steamed out of the river and through the northern channels of the Thames Estuary. The reason we proceeded north from the Thames and not west down channel and thence northwesterly across the North Atlantic directly towards Hudson Strait was that we were following in the wake of the old sailing whaling ships outward bound for the Greenland-Baffin Bay whaling grounds. They sailed north about the British Isles and stretched thence west across to Cape Farewell in 59° North, a route which, in summer, gave more chance of favourable winds than in the zone of 'westerly variables' further south.

It was a wild and blustery morning for our setting forth; a strong southwest wind was blowing and kicking up such a rough short sea that the pilot could not be discharged off the Sunk Light Vessel, the northerly limit of Thames Pilotage, but had to be carried on to smoother

H B C Archives

The 'Discovery' under sail, from a water-colour by T.G. Purvis dated 1911. Originally built in 1900-01 for the first Scott expedition to the Antarctic, she was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1904 for £10,000.

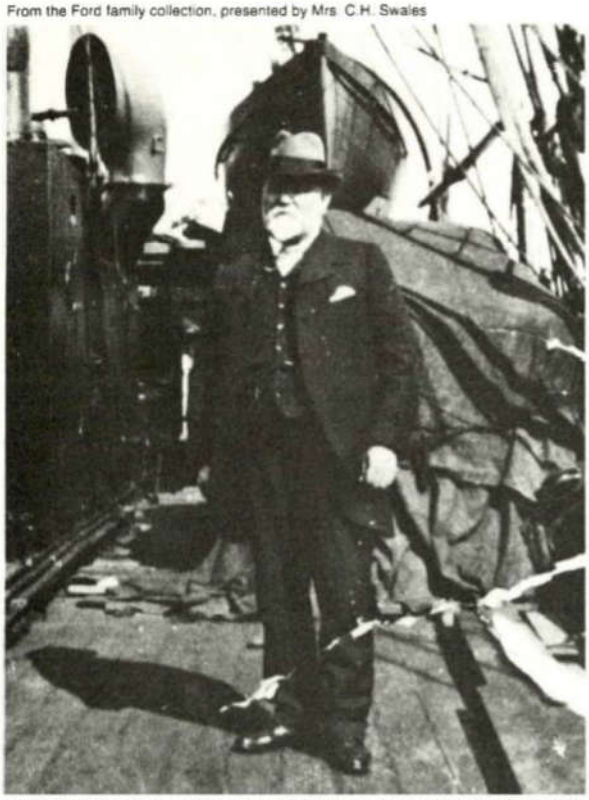
water under Orfordness before he could be transferred to the Harwich pilot boat.

By that time the wind was moderating and shifting northerly so no sail could be set and we proceeded under steam only until early on Monday morning when the wind shifted northwest and the fore and aft sails were set. The wind continued to moderate and shift westerly and at noon, for the first time that voyage, the order was given 'All hands! Make sail!' All the square sails on the foremast were loosed, the lower topsail sheeted home, the upper topsail and topgallant sail hoisted and the foresail set. As the winds were light the sails were not actually of much assistance to the engine but the 'sail drill' was useful in enabling us to check that all was shipshape aloft. During the night, however, the fickle wind shifted northerly and strengthened and by Tuesday morning the square sails were furled and only the fore and afters remained set for the rest of the passage to Peterhead, north of Aberdeen, our first port of call.

During the passage to the northward we were much puzzled by the fact that the pointer of the engine-room telegraph on the bridge always indicated 'half speed' but when I asked the second mate for the reason he only laughed and said it was because there was no hurry, no hurry at all. It was something new in my experience to sail in a ship which was not in a hurry! Later Mr Hayward explained that the removal of the orlop deck and divisional bulkheads between decks to provide a clear hold for cargo had reduced the original lateral strength of the vessel so much that to run the main engine at full speed would subject the wooden barque's hull and fastenings to an unwise degree of stress and strain. Therefore, when under steam, the engine-room telegraph was always (except in an emergency) set at half speed and the engineers kept the revolutions at the fastest rate which experience had proved to be safe and which, under favourable conditions, propelled the vessel at about five knots. There was a second reason for the reduced speed — the main bunkers only held a little more than 50 tons of coal which was supplemented by a reserve of briquettes of patent fuel stacked on deck. Experience was to prove how necessary was economy in fuel consumption to the successful prosecution of the voyage.

By the time we were clear of the Thames all hands had

From the Ford family collection, presented by Mrs. C.H. Swales



Captain John G. Ford, master of the Company's ship 'Lady Head' until she was wrecked in 1903, thereafter the 'Stork' until the autumn of 1905. He took command of the 'Discovery' in 1906.

settled in and the regular ship routine of watch and watch (four hours on deck and four below) was established. Girdleness was passed during Tuesday night and at 8 a.m. Wednesday, we anchored in Peterhead Bay. During that day a consignment of various stores was loaded, a supply of provisions taken on board and the fresh-water tanks topped up. Late in the afternoon two passengers joined us: young men going out to join the Hudson's Bay Company service. At 7:30 p.m. the anchor was weighed and we proceeded to sea under steam and sail, steering northwards to pass east of the Orkney Islands.

When we sailed from the Thames, London was celebrating the crowning of the successor to King Edward the Seventh and the day after we left Peterhead was Coronation Day. At noon, when eight bells were struck, Captain Ford shouted 'Splice the main brace' — the time-honoured order at sea for an issue of spirits. All hands promptly mustered at the door of the saloon where the steward served tots of grog which we drank to the health of our sovereign and, responding to the call of our gallant captain, we gave three cheers for another sailor — King George the Fifth.

While we were paying our respects to His Majesty we were steaming and sailing towards Fair Isle, the small island situated between the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and by early evening we were clear of North Ronaldshay, the northernmost point of the Orkneys. The course was now altered to traverse the Fair Isle Passage and sail thence across the North Atlantic towards Cape Farewell, the southernmost point of Greenland, distant about 1,400 miles. As previously stated, we were following the whalers' north about route looking for fair winds to speed us on our course to the westward but the first wind we encountered in the Atlantic was a rising southwest gale, and our barque soon proved that her reputation for excessive rolling was well merited. In the heavy Atlantic swell, augmented by a rapidly rising sea she lurched and rolled heavily, causing all loose articles above and below decks to scuttle wildly from side to side of the ship while her wooden timbers creaked and groaned. As the gale increased the square sails were furled and an oil bag streamed from the forecastle head to modify the force of the seas now sweeping over the bulwarks and flooding the decks fore and aft. The reserve briquettes of patent fuel stacked on deck were secured by a temporary bunker made of dunnage planks in the way of the fore hatch and under the pounding of the water on deck rushing from side to side, the planks began to work loose. All the deck hands were therefore ordered to assist the carpenter to cobble up the bunker and retrieve the loose blocks which had escaped and were trundling to and fro in the flood. Work on the reeling decks was difficult but after a couple of hours of hard work the bunker was made secure. Staggering, laughing and cursing we chivvied the loose blocks round the decks, retrieved them from the flood waters and tossed them into the bunker — but not all of them. Our aged carpenter had given us many useful tips about the barque and her peculiar ways, and he now advised us to pass, surreptitiously, a few briquettes into the forecastle to serve as a reserve for the circular iron stove provided to warm our quarters in the frigid times to come when the chief engineer would only allow us one small bag of coal per week. We were to bless old 'Chips' for his advice during the homeward run.

The strong southwesterly gale continued throughout the night but moderated during the next day and by the evening was shifting round to the northeast, a fine fair wind to which we trimmed the yards and by Saturday morning our barque was rolling along under full sail. That night, however, the wind shifted back to the westerly quarter but during Sunday, 25 June, the wind died away, shifted back northeasterly and blew a hard gale. But this was a fair wind to which we set as much sail as she could safely carry as she laboured in the heavy seas that rolled rails under, flooded deck cabins and galley, and threatened to demolish, once again, the temporary deck bunker. When Monday dawned the gale moderated to a fine fresh northerly breeze and we were rolling along on our westerly course with every stitch of canvas set and drawing taut full. These favourable conditions, under full sail and the engine going at the usual half speed, proved the *Discovery* to be a very sluggish sailer, for she logged

no more than five knots. When outward bound for the Antarctic in 1901 Scott was dismayed at the slow speed of the barque but he had to sail halfway round the world to reach the scene of his labours whereas we had only to cross the Atlantic to deliver our lading and, as Mr Hayward affirmed, there was no hurry, no hurry at all. It was just as well, for the fine fair wind lasted but two days and during Wednesday, 28 June, the breeze died away, shifted round to the westward once more and began to increase in strength, so with the yards on the backstays once more, we proceeded close-hauled at an even slower speed.

During the previous week the stack of patent fuel on deck had been steadily reduced by being passed below to be consumed in the boiler fires and on Friday, 30 June, the last of the briquettes were, to our relief, dumped below and we were able to clear away the deck bunker and have a clear, clean deck once more. The weather being fine we were employed in setting up the fore-rigging which the heavy rolling had slackened. As the forerigging was hemp (shrouds and backstays) set up with dead eyes and lanyards, it had to be tautened up 'luff on luff' as in Nelson's day.

The last of the reserve fuel being now below the captain and chief engineer had to consider the amount of coal remaining in the bunkers and the probable length of the passage ahead. Following their deliberations the order was given to make sail and when all the square sails and fore and afters had been set, the engine was stopped and the boiler fires drawn; the *Discovery* was now a wind-jammer, depending on sail alone. Our position at this time was about 500 miles east of Cape Farewell, and the Denmark Strait between Greenland and Iceland was open north of us.

Now when a fair wind would have been a blessing the wind shifted ahead, a hard westerly gale rose to bar our way and by midnight we were hove to on the port tack under lower topsails and staysails. The gale raged during the next forty-eight hours; the barque rolled heavily, labouring and straining in the high seas which raced up incessantly to sweep over the bulwarks and flood the decks. During Wednesday the fury of the gale began to abate and as the wind shifted southwesterly we trimmed the yards and sail was made as the weather improved until by midnight the barque was once more under full sail. As our position was now north of the latitude of Cape Farewell the helm was put up and we wore ship round to the starboard tack heading to the southward.

A fortnight had elapsed since we cleared the Fair Isle Passage and although it was high summer we had experienced a succession of strong gales and rough seas, but now the winds, though still westerly, were moderate and the sea slight. After so many days of excessive rolling it was a pleasure to have steady decks once more. As the *Discovery* glided along with every stitch of canvas set under sunny skies we rubbed our hands and repeated the old 'deep water' slogan: '*This* is the weather we signed for!'

. . . he chanted his commands in an old-fashioned manner . . . 'Well, the main yard! Be-e-lay there; oh, be-e-lay.'

The reason why the *Discovery* rolled so heavily in rough seas is because she is round-bottomed as a barrel and, perforce, she rolled almost on her beam ends before the force of flotation could act on her upper body, check the roll and send her back upright — to roll just as heavily the other way. It must be remembered that she had been built in 1900–01 for the express purpose of conveying the first Scott expedition to the Antarctic and had been designed for polar exploration with every possibility of being frozen in among polar ice. Under such conditions a ship of conventional design with a small rise of floor, which tends to counteract heavy rolling, would run serious risk of having her sides crushed in by ice exerting enormous lateral pressure above the turn of the bilge. In the case of the *Discovery* with her rounded, barrel-like bilge, such pressure could be expected to make her rise like an orange pip squeezed between the fingers. The fact that the barque survived being frozen in during severe Antarctic winters proved the soundness of the theory. In a North Atlantic storm however she lurched over from side to side causing extreme discomfort and difficulty on board, especially for the stokers trying to shovel coal into the boiler furnaces — and for the cook struggling to keep his balance and prepare meals.

The weather remained fair as we sailed to the southward in light breezes with the *Discovery* making no more than one or two knots, but this slow progress troubled us not at all. During hard gales and high seas we often repeated the old mariners' saying that the man who went to sea for pleasure would go to hell for pastime. We were not seafaring for either fun or fame but for the money. It was our chosen way of earning a living and if it were not in one ship it must be in another. Our slogan in the forecastle was 'more days, more dollars', especially when we thought of the four and a half golden sovereigns piling up month by month as long as the present voyage lasted.

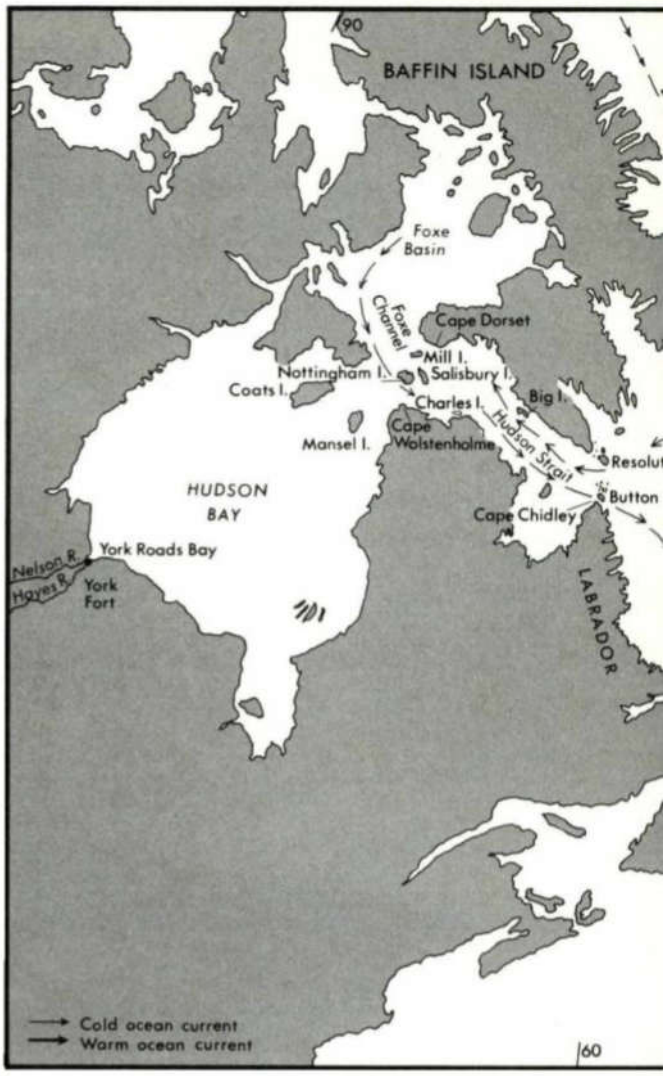
Thus we went about our duties happy and contented, but the happiest man on board was Captain John Ford. He had been in command of the Company's ships for

more than twenty years and was thus experienced in all the difficulties and hazards to be met with during a voyage to Hudson Bay. As this was his sixth voyage in the *Discovery* he was wise to the barque's peculiarities. He was a 'sailor of the sail' of the old school and with main engine stopped, the bridge engine-room telegraph hidden from sight under a canvas cover, and the engine-room staff sitting on buckets playing cards beside their silent engine, Old Jock was in his proper element. While at the wheel it was pleasant to see him strutting to and fro, casting glances aloft at every turn to study the set of the sails and when he ordered us to man the braces to trim the yards to a shift of wind he chanted his commands in an old-fashioned manner — 'Well, the main yard! Be-e-lay there; oh, be-e-lay!'

Since our departure we had encountered fair winds and foul, moderate seas and rough — all the chances and changes to be met with in any ocean passage — but ahead of us there lurked a hazard peculiar to navigation in the regions to which we were bound. Captain Luke Foxe, who preceded us to Hudson Bay in 1631 seeking a North West Passage, described this hazard as 'this prodigious thing we call ice' and we were to discover how apt was Foxe's choice of adjective.

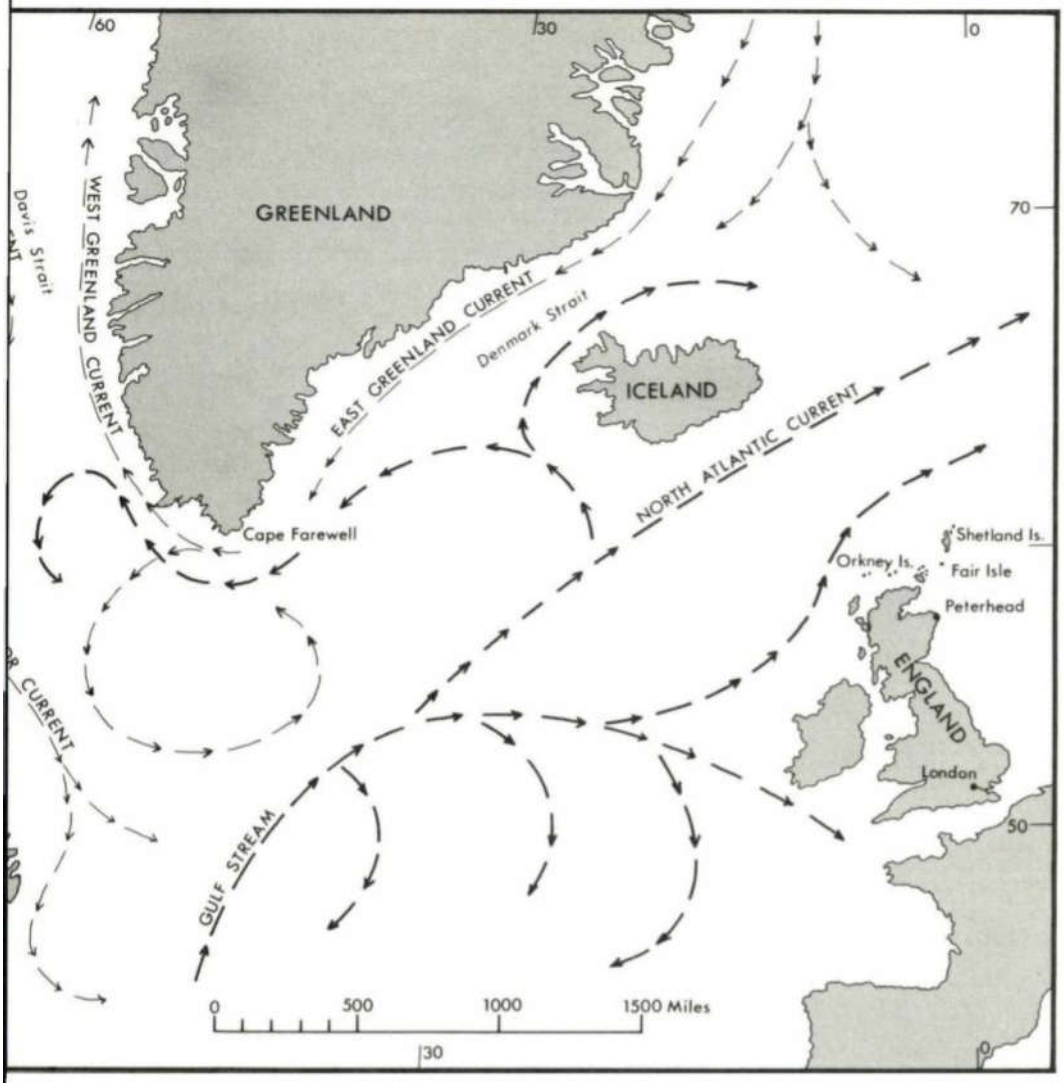
We were now approaching Greenland, one of the world's largest islands whose northern coasts face the Polar Sea about 400 miles from the North Pole, and whose southern extremity is in latitude 59°46' North. A current flows south from the Arctic along the island's east coast, through the Denmark Strait between Iceland and Greenland and thence to Cape Farewell at the southern extremity of Greenland. Beyond that Cape the current is deflected by the Gulf Stream, turns west and flows thence north along the west coast of Greenland back towards the arctic regions. From late spring to early autumn the current, as it circumnavigates Greenland, carries with it from the frozen north, masses of drifting pack ice and bergs of various sizes. As this mass of ice is swept round the south of Greenland it forms a belt round Cape Farewell extending far to seaward. Therefore between April and September it is imperative to give Cape Farewell a wide berth and pass well south of it. In 1727 an outward-bound Company ship encountering ice too close to the Cape was caught, crushed and sunk between two large floes ranging in the ocean swell.

We continued to be favoured with fine weather until Sunday, 9 July, when we encountered rain showers and fog banks — a possible indication of ice in the vicinity. The next day opened with thick fog and, Captain Ford having ordered steam to be raised, the boiler fires were lit and at 11:30 a.m. the main engine was started at the usual half speed, all the square sails were furled and we continued on a southwesterly course with extra lookouts posted during the frequent foggy periods. At midday on Thursday we crossed the meridian of Cape Farewell



about 80 miles south of the Cape. In clear periods between fog patches several large bergs were sighted north of us but we were giving them a wide berth and passed on our course without difficulty or danger.

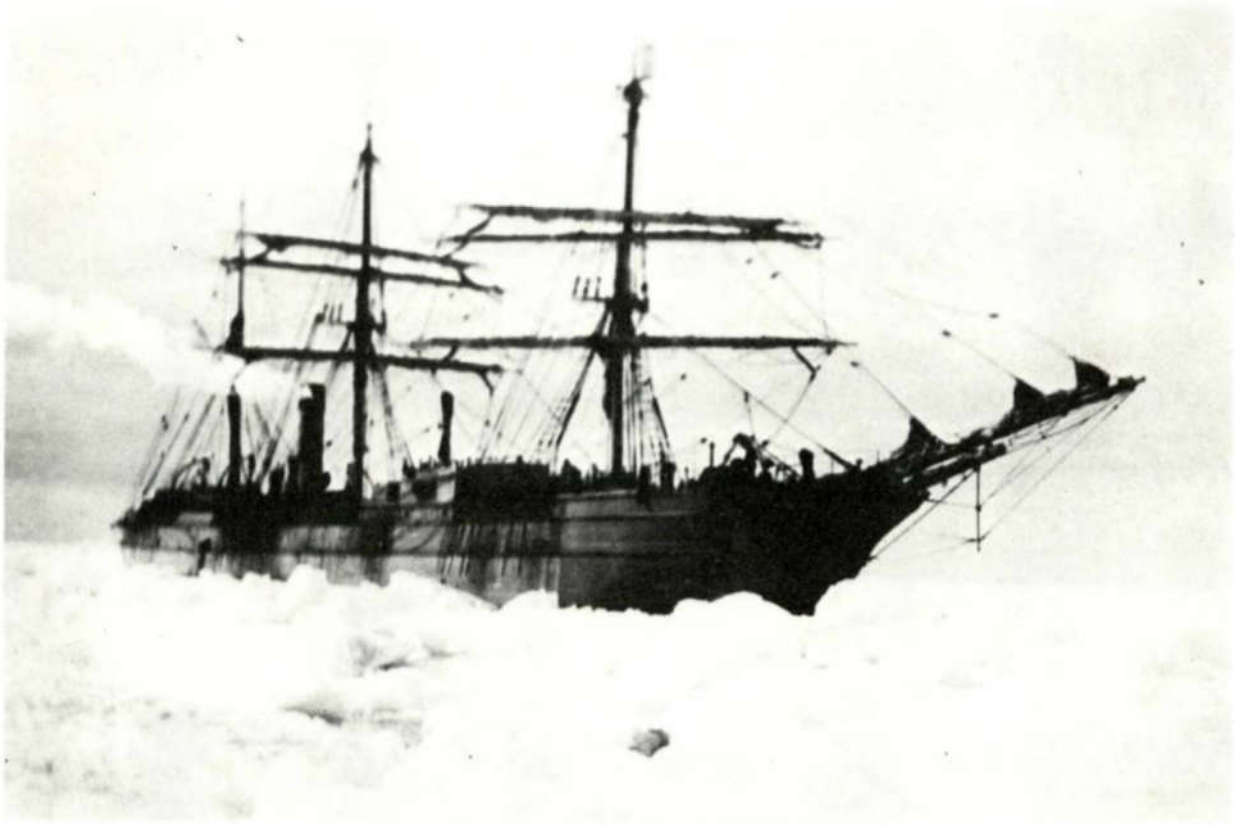
After passing Cape Farewell and entering Davis Strait between Greenland and North America the course was altered north of west steering for the northern entrance to Hudson Strait, distant about 700 miles. After a period of calm and light airs the wind shifted to the southeast and during Friday all sail was set to the favourable breeze and with the engine turning at half speed we proceeded to cross Davis Strait, logging a steady five knots, leaving astern the ice bergs which, having rounded Cape Farewell, were sailing majestically north in the West Greenland Current back towards the high altitudes of their origin. While this was occurring on the east side of Davis Strait, on the west side to which we were bound, a counter current was running south from the Arctic. This current flows along the coast of Baffin Island, crosses the mouth of the Hudson Strait, thence south along the coast of Labrador, on past Newfoundland into the Atlantic.



A ship bound for Hudson Bay must pass athwart the Labrador Current before entering the strait and this traverse can be rendered difficult by the fact that between spring and autumn the Labrador Current is often encumbered with polar ice carried south from the Arctic. The amount of ice varies greatly from season to season — a variation which depends on tidal surges in the oceans caused by the gravitational pull of the sun and moon. In years when they are in position to exert the maximum effect causing the highest tides on the earth, one result is to push a submarine stream of warm water far enough north to reach arctic ice. This ice then undergoes partial thawing, breaks up and is carried south in the Labrador Current. In years of normal tides sailing ships often reached Hudson Strait unimpeded by much arctic ice, but in seasons when the ice was moving south in large quantities this traverse was a hazardous, even impossible task. If the ship ventured into the moving ice she could, if she survived, be carried so far south that she would be compelled to abandon her voyage for that season and return home. This happened in 1668 when the *Nonsuch* and the *Eaglet* were dispatched for Hudson Bay — the voyage which led to the founding of the Hudson's Bay Company. The *Nonsuch* succeeded in entering Hudson Strait but her consort was trapped in heavy pack ice, carried far south and her voyage was frustrated. In 1736 a Company ship had almost succeeded in crossing the Labrador Current when the wind failed and while she was lying becalmed the ice closed in, crushed in her sides and she sank in 20 minutes.

These and many similar losses, taught mariners to be cautious and it became axiomatic that ships must never attempt to enter the strait before the middle of July and that it was hazardous for a ship to become entangled in ice before she could enter at least 30 to 40 miles inside Hudson Strait.

Further experience revealed the existence of a loophole through which the wily seaman could work his ship into Hudson Strait actually assisted by the Labrador Current. The eastern entrance to the strait is about 32 miles wide between Resolution Island on the north and the Button Islands off Cape Chidley on the south side. The way in was found to exist on the north side being caused by an off-shoot of the main current turning



H B C Collection

The 'Discovery' trapped in the ice off Resolution Island. Undated.

round Resolution Island and flowing *west* along the north shore of the strait, carrying with it arctic pack and bergs (known as 'outside' ice) as far as Big Island about halfway through the strait. At the same time a counter current flows *east* along the south shore of the strait carrying Bay (or 'inside') ice to join the Labrador Current off Cape Chidley. The collision of the two ice streams at the confluence of the currents causes great turbulence round the Button Islands and Cape Chidley. Therefore ships bound for the Bay should avoid Cape Chidley at all costs and steer for Resolution Island. In a sailing ship, this was not always possible and depended on the amount of arctic ice in the main current.

Crossing Davis Strait and steering towards Resolution Island we encountered a mixture of weather. Saturday, 15 July, was a day of thick fog. The engine was stopped and we ghosted along under reduced canvas with extra lookouts posted. During the evening of the 16th, the fog cleared and the wind died away to a flat calm. The engine was started at half speed and the sails were furled. Tuesday was a fine summer day with the wind freshening to a fair southeasterly breeze to which we set all our canvas. The cables were this day shackled to the bower anchors which were then secured outboard ready for instant use. Wednesday was a day of fog patches, rain showers and moderate winds. The noon position placed the barque about 140 miles from Resolution Island. Towards evening we encountered much fog which indicated the possible presence of ice; therefore the engine was stopped and we ghosted along under sail making about two knots. At 8 p.m. the watches were mustered, the helmsman and lookouts relieved, the first mate and port watch took charge while the second mate and the starboard watch went below. We turned into our bunks ready for an instant call but were not disturbed until we were roused by one of the port watch shouting from the door of the forecastle at a quarter to midnight: 'One bell! One bell! Rouse out you sleepers!'

As we woke we heard the mate shouting orders and the port watch singing out as they shortened sail. We were soon on deck and glancing aloft saw that the fore and main topgallant sails and the foresail had been clewed and bunted up. At eight bells the helmsman was relieved, the port watch went below and the second mate ordered his watch: 'Aloft and furl'. I mounted the fore rigging followed by Clifford while the other two members of the starboard watch went up to furl the main topgallant sail. Up on the fore topgallant yard Clifford and I hauled the sail up on the yard and while passing the gaskets I was conscious of a continuous murmuring which seemed to

come out of the fog on the port side. We were making fast the last gaskets when we were startled by a sudden shout from the captain on the bridge below: 'Hang on aloft!! Hang on!' Clifford and I braced ourselves on the foot-ropes and looking down saw, emerging from the fog ahead, the edge of a large sheet of ice right athwart the bows. Even as we saw it the advancing ship crashed into it, the bows lifted and the foremast whipped under the impact. It was as well that we had received that timely warning to hang on, but our barque had been designed to cope with ice and after the initial check she gathered way and her stout raking stem, sheathed with iron plating, charged into the ice sheet and forced it aside. It slithered aft along the starboard side to vanish in the murk astern. At the same time the source of the murmuring noise was revealed. The fog to port had receded a little and at its base appeared a line of surf — a slight swell breaking along the edge of the pack ice, extending fore and aft as far as was visible. Having made fast the fore topgallant sail Clifford and I descended to the foreyard where, joined by our watch-mates from the main, we furled the foresail and descended to the deck to coil up the gear. We now learned that the presence of the pack ice had been detected about 9:30 p.m. and that we were sailing north along its edge hoping, if it were an isolated floe, to clear its northern end and resume our course for Resolution Island, still distant about 100 miles.

When daylight came in we could see that the dense ice field, partly shrouded in misty rain, stretched away to north and westward as far as could be seen. We were still ghosting along under double topsails and fore and afters but the occasional clang of a furnace door indicated that steam was being raised. At midday the pack still stretched away north and we were almost up to the latitude of Resolution Island. There could be no doubt that 1911 was a season when a vast quantity of ice of every description was on the move south from the polar regions. A sailing vessel would now have been compelled to bear away and stand off and on in Davis Strait until a break in the stream of ice opened up enabling her to sail through to Resolution Island. The *Discovery,* however, had the advantage of steam power enabling her to be worked through the open leads thrusting aside the loose pieces of ice. In the early afternoon, therefore, Captain Ford decided that a passage would have to be made through the pack. The engine was started and all the sails were furled and made fast. A canvas screen was secured breast high across the fore part of the foretop, to which elevated position the officer of the watch now mounted to con the barque through the most favourable leads. On the bridge Captain Ford scanned the pack closely until a promising opening appeared which, the officer of the watch confirmed, seemed to offer a clear passage into the heart of the pack. The master then

'Hang on aloft!' Clifford and I braced ourselves . . . and looking down saw, emerging from the fog ahead, the edge of a large sheet of ice right athwart the bows.

ordered the helmsman to alter course to port, the barque swung round to the westward, the helm was steadied, the *Discovery* steamed into the lane and our first encounter with ice navigation that season commenced.

There could be no question of forcing a way through, for having been frozen rock-hard during many years in the Arctic, 'outside' ice rides low in the water and could be up to 40 feet in depth. The whole mass we had to cross was a wild conglomeration of ice fields, among which icebergs of various sizes and shapes reared their heads, moving steadily southwards in the Labrador Current. Being of different sizes and weights, the floes, moving at different speeds, frequently collided and ground together before drifting apart, leaving an open channel cluttered with pieces of ice broken off during the collision. These leads provided the means of working our way through to the strait and it was the duty of the officer of the watch to survey the scene from the foretop and to give the necessary orders to the helmsman to steer the barque through the channels which, however tortuous, appeared to offer the best direction towards Resolution Island. On the bridge Captain Ford watched that the helm orders were correctly obeyed and noted each change of course. The skies were overcast and the weather gloomy with frequent showers of misty rain; therefore the visibility was poor as is often the case over ice fields. There was no possibility of fixing our position by observation and the vessel had to be navigated solely by dead reckoning. Every change of course and distance run had to be recorded and the assumed position frequently plotted on the chart from which was laid off the bearing of our objective, and this bearing guided the officer of the watch in the choice of leads into which to direct the helmsman to steer. These narrow and irregular channels between the ice fields were studded with the loose pieces broken off by the jostling of the packs in collision, but these were no obstacle to progress which was accompanied by a continual noise of crashing, grinding and bumping as our barque thrust aside these fragments from her path.

Thus we proceeded, zig-zagging through the open lanes until the early hours of Friday when the floes ahead were

so closely packed that the engine had to be stopped for an hour until a favourable lead opened. Late in the forenoon the heavy pack ahead was observed to be a solid mass. The barque was therefore manoeuvred alongside the adjacent floe, rope ladders were put over the side and we descended onto the ice armed with long iron rods. With these implements we dug holes in the ice opposite the bow and stern into which ice anchors were inserted. These were short heavy pieces of round iron bent to form a shallow hook, with a hawser attached which was hove taut on board and made fast thus securely mooring the vessel. The surface of the floes was rough and undulating with numerous crater-like hollows filled with water. This was melted snow — fine fresh water delivered free alongside — so we helped ourselves. A hand pump and hoses were landed on the ice and by their means we replenished our depleted fresh-water tanks. After a couple of hours, we were called upon to cease operations, return pump, hoses and ourselves on board and unmoor the barque as the floes were on the move. The wheel was manned, the officer of the watch mounted to his post in the foretop, the main engine was started and we resumed steaming through the winding channels which were opening up. Throughout Saturday we made very slow progress, for the close-packed ice occasionally brought us to a dead stop to wait until the packs parted sufficiently to allow us to proceed.

Nevertheless our progress, if slow, was sure. At noon on Sunday, 23 July, our calculated position was approximately 19 miles from the dead reckoning position the previous day — average speed about three-quarters of a knot — but Captain Ford's skill in ice navigation had brought his ship within ten miles of the southern point of Resolution Island where the inshore waters of the Labrador Current begin to branch off from the main south-going stream to turn west to flow along the north shore of the Hudson Strait. Now our slow and tortuous traverse athwart the Labrador Current had been achieved and with the fair current under our keel our barque passed the island during Sunday evening. We were still closely encumbered with pack icebergs but now we were all bound the same way — to the westward.

The strait was full of ice from shore to shore but the middle was filled with a local product. The strait becomes frozen over from the end of October but with rising temperatures in early summer this ice begins to break up and being new, one-season ice, it is thin stuff compared with the 'outside' ice. Therefore, once past Resolution Island we worked our way towards the centre of the strait where the 'inside' ice afforded easier going and allowed our barque to progress at an average speed of about three knots during the next two days.

The weather was now generally fine and sunny and we were far enough north to enjoy perpetual daylight but these warmer conditions created difficulties of visibility due to areas of different temperatures over ice and water. Seen from the deck, objects presented clear definition for only limited distances beyond which all was haze, refraction and mirage. Even from his elevated position in the foretop the officer of the watch could frequently not see clearly far enough ahead to be able to determine which of several lanes should be entered. A promising open lead disappearing into shimmering haze could, two or three miles ahead, terminate in a cul-de-sac. At such times of uncertainty our aged carpenter, who from long experience was a good ice pilot, would be ordered to mount to the crow's-nest on the main topgallant mast. Having surveyed the scene from this lofty perch, 'Chips' would report on conditions ahead and advise the officer which were the best leads in sight.

. . . we saw the face of a very startled walrus, with one flipper on a ledge of ice, peering round the corner to watch the monstrous invader pass.

Although the ice fields appeared to be stationary they were in continual motion being slowly moved by tides and currents grinding them together and moving them apart, leaving loose pieces of ice floating in the open leads. Steaming through the open lanes the isolated lumps were thrust aside by the barque's raking stem and the bumping and crashing of these collisions were the only sounds which disturbed the silence of those icy wastes and the peace of the local inhabitants, for we were not the only forms of animal life in those desolate areas. Parties of seals were frequently seen basking in the sun on the floes while the occasional walrus would watch us pass on our way. On one occasion a lone walrus was observed enjoying a siesta on a large piece of ice in mid-channel ahead of us. The helmsman was directed to steer for the icy raft and we gathered to see the outcome. Our noisy approach woke the sleeper and he stared in astonishment at the approaching monster, but heaved his great bulk into the water just before the stem struck his icy bed. The floe tilted and capsized under the impact while the late occupant belted along at his utmost speed to gain the shelter of a small inlet in the side of the adjacent floe. As we were steaming past we saw the face of a very startled walrus, with one flipper on a ledge of ice, peering round the corner to watch the monstrous invader pass. His round eyes and tusks gave him the comical appearance of an elderly gentleman with drooping mustaches. The most impressive of the local fauna were the half-dozen polar bears which were sighted at various times moving over the floes.

About 200 miles west of Resolution Island the middle of the strait is narrowed to 60 miles by Big Island off the north shore where the indraught from the Labrador Current peters out and here, during 26 July, we had to work through the heavier 'outside' pack ice brought in by the west-going stream. Once past Big Island we steamed into more open waters and encountered only scattered small packs and isolated pieces of thinner 'inside' ice. During the night of 27 and 28 July we passed Charles Island, a narrow island about 25 miles long situated within 10 to 20 miles off the south shore. During the forenoon of 28 July, Salisbury Island was sighted bearing northwest. Now the ice conditions became difficult and by late afternoon we were, once again, beset in heavy, deep pack ice, for the following reason:

The western termination of Hudson Strait is formed by Salisbury and Nottingham Islands. South of Nottingham Island and about 30 miles distant, Cape Wolstenholme marks the western end of Hudson Strait and the northeastern extremity of Hudson Bay. About 25 miles north of Salisbury Island the coast of Baffin Island turns gradually northerly from Cape Dorset to form the eastern side of the 70-mile-wide Foxe Channel which leads north into Foxe Basin. The northern extremity of this great sheet of water is in 70° North and it is ice-bound for much of the year. As its only outlet is the Foxe Channel a limited amount of ice works through to the southward during the short period of one open season. The ice which does reach Hudson Strait therefore is several seasons old, hard as rock, heavy and lying deep in the water. This dangerous ice is carried by the currents round Mill Island, thence past Salisbury Island and across to Charles Island. From there the east-going current carries it along the south shores of the strait to Cape Chidley, thence to join the arctic ice going south in the Labrador Current. As the stream of Foxe Basin ice is being carried down the east coast of Salisbury to Charles Island it moves diagonally across the track of an inward-bound ship making for Hudson's Bay. This difficult traverse was known to the old navigators as 'Charles' Patch' — and difficult it must have been to ships depending on wind power alone, as we were to realize. From late afternoon on Friday, 28 July we had to struggle through very heavy ice for the next 24 hours. Several times our barque was closely beset and at times, severely nipped as she drifted with the moving pack. When leads opened up and we were able to proceed, she was occasionally struck and buffeted by floes ranging along in the current. During the following evening conditions became easier, we were through Charles' Patch and by 8 p.m. on Saturday, we were passing Cape Wolstenholme. We were not altogether clear of ice, for we continued to encounter some very heavy stuff coming down the west side of Nottingham Island. The floes were now more scattered and so easily avoided until during the forenoon of Sunday, 30 July, the officer of the watch sighted, between drifting fog banks, open water ahead. At 11:00 a.m. as our barque steamed clear and left the last of the ice floes astern, he descended from the foretop to his customary position on the bridge.

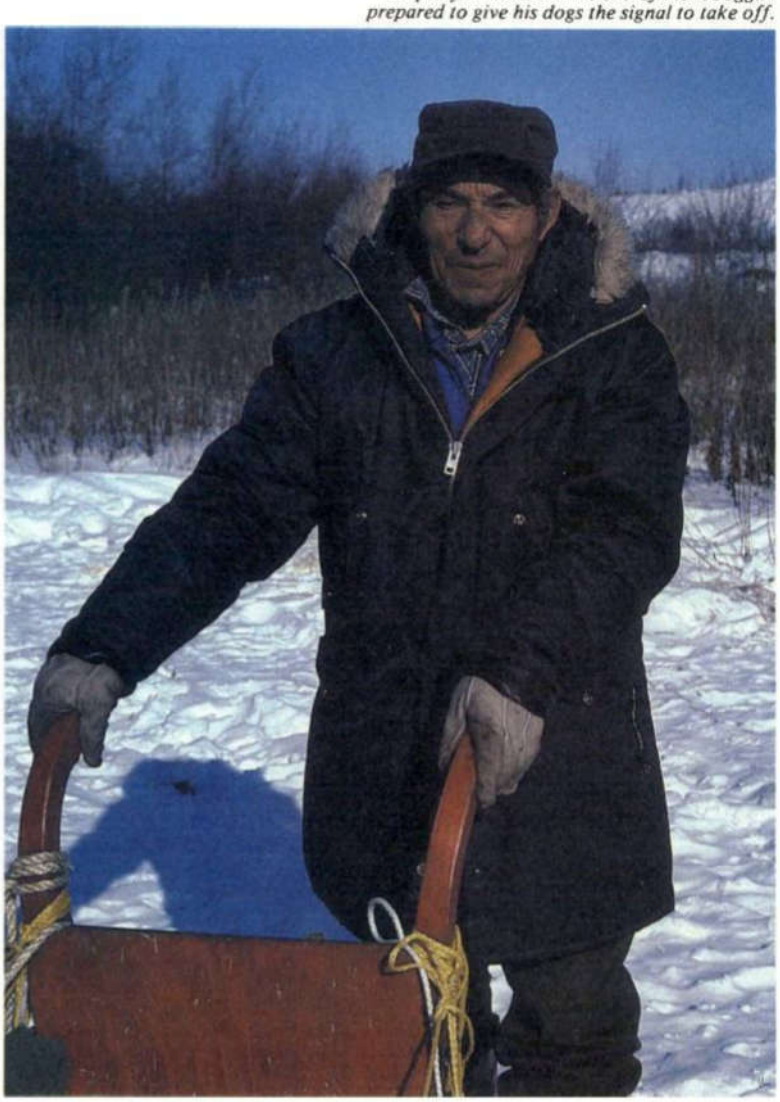
We had first entered ice fields in Davis Strait on 20 July and for ten days and nights we had threaded our way through the floes, passing icebergs of various sizes and shapes, and our passage had been accompanied by the continuous crashing, thumping and bumping as the *Discovery* pushed and scattered the loose pieces of ice from her path. We had become accustomed to the unceasing noise and now it had ceased. We seemed to proceed, as befitted the day, in a sabbath calm. The course was altered southwest to pass between Coates and Mansel Islands, the 60-mile-wide channel leading south into Hudson Bay. No more ice was encountered and we proceeded in fair weather to the southwest towards Fort York, and our first port of call.

Passage through the ice had been accomplished in perpetual daylight. Now the nights were marked by short spells of darkness which lengthened as we steamed towards lower latitudes, and during the night of 2 August we were fascinated by a wonderful display of aurora borealis. Shafts and bands of light streamed across the sky and slowly faded out, while a wavy band of luminosity stretched across the heavens along which patches of stronger light travelled giving the whole affair the appearance of the base of gigantic curtain slowing stirring in the wind. Watching the astonishing spectacle I recalled the Old Testament reference to mariners: 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep.'

The western shores of Hudson Bay are generally low and the inshore waters very shallow; therefore approach to the coast must be cautious and soundings taken frequently. During the evening of 3 August the lead gave warning of shoaling water and at midnight sails were furled, the engine stopped and an anchor dropped to await daylight. At 4:30 the next morning the anchor was weighed and we proceeded, sounding continually, until at 2 p.m. on Friday, the engine was stopped and the port anchor let go in eight fathoms of water in York Roads, the broad shallow bay into which flow the Nelson and Hayes Rivers. The Hudson's Bay Company's post of York Factory is situated at the mouth of the latter river and the shore line being low, the buildings were only visible from aloft in our anchorage nearly ten miles distant. ◆

In the Summer 1983 issue of 'The Beaver', Captain Williamson describes the arrival at York Factory and proceedings at Charlton Island.

Snowbird (Napoleon Marten) of Fort Chipewyan stands at the end of his toboggan prepared to give his dogs the signal to take off.



Sled Journey with Snowbird

By Richard Harrington

Photographer-author Harrington has been a traveller to remote areas of the world for many years.

THERE ARE FEW OPPORTUNITIES left these days for travellers to enjoy winter journeys by sled and dog-team. Few husky dogs are left; they have been replaced in most settlements by snowmobiles.

But in Yellowknife last year I heard of one enthusiastic and competent outfitter who arranges such trips with Cree and Chipewyan Indians. Jacques van Pelt, a long-time resident of Fort Smith, N.W.T., of an energetic, enterprising and happy nature, was first to interest local Indians in this venture. The dog-team expeditions are planned to introduce novices to the highly skilled ways of survival in the subarctic boreal forests during the winter season. Now there are four or five trips scheduled every winter, lasting five days or longer.

The starting point for our sled journey was Fort Chipewyan, a historic spot in the extreme northeastern corner of Alberta. It is Alberta's oldest continuously inhabited settlement, established in 1788 by the North West Company as a distribution centre for their extensive fur-trade operation in the Northwest. Today it has a population of 1,200 people.

In early March we came into Fort Chipewyan by jet from Edmonton, Alberta, and were met at the airport by van Pelt. There were four of us: Dr A. Fost, an allergy consultant, with his son David (18 years), of Verona, N.J.; and Bob Reid (74) from Palm Springs, California, an inveterate traveller always in search of adventure. On the first night we were easily quartered in private homes, there not being much else in Fort Chipewyan. The next morning — brilliant, clear and cold with the thermometer at -15 °C — we were taken to the outskirts of the settlement to the small bare home of our Cree guide. Snowbird, whose formal name is Napoleon Marten, is 78 and a highly respected member of the native

The dog-teams cross Mamawi Lake on a fine, clear, sunny day.

Bob Reid of Palm Springs, California, helps Snowbird get his dogs into harness for a day of travel, and left, a sled dog awaits his evening meal.

Evening light with lengthening shadows spills across the Athabasca River in northern Alberta.

At noon: a fire in a sheltered place among the spruce trees, tea and strips of roasted buffalo meat and right, a trapper's cabin in Wood Buffalo National Park. A snowmobile is used for quick trips to the store.

community. He was born in the bush, had always lived there, and loved the life on the land best of all. In 1980, he brought his ailing wife out of the bush and settled on the edge of town.

'Fort Chip too many people' he said as he shook our hands. He was small and wiry with a twinkle in his clear eyes and an engineer's cap over his black hair. In the bush and on the frozen lakes, we found him a highly intelligent and agile guide; he quickly gained our respect for his knowledge of the land and his decisions along the trail.

Dressed for winter travel are Dr Arthur F. Fost and his son David of New Jersey.

Snowbird laid out the harness and buckled in his six eager, jumping and yapping dogs. Soon we shot off across frozen Athabasca Lake — four toboggans altogether, each with four to nine dogs. Snowbird's son-in-law, Joe Dene, age 58, drove a snowmobile that towed a toboggan with all our gear and food, as well as food for the dogs.

One of the group was a young white woman, Mary-Jean Bossenmair, a National Parks employee who came with her own team of strong healthy dogs. She handled them competently and was a happy companion, always helping with the chores. Dr Fost and his son had never been north of the border, and to them the experience of dog-team travel in the wilderness of the subarctic region was a totally novel and exciting experience.

Our journey was a five-day trip of around eighty miles mostly inside Wood Buffalo National Park. The park itself is a vast preserve of some 17,200 square miles: about half the size of the state of Maine, or a little smaller than the province of Nova Scotia. It was established to protect the last surviving herd of wood buffalo, the larger, darker northern relatives of plains bison. Soon after the park was established in 1922, however, 6,000 plains bison were moved in. The two species mingled, and today the bison in the park may all be hybrids. In the summer some 46 species of mammals and 227 species of birds have been observed in the park. Within its boundaries is the northernmost rookery of white pelicans in North America. It is also the world's only nesting ground for the endangered whooping crane.

Our dogs soon settled to an even trot at four to five miles an hour. By luck, I sat in Snowbird's canvas-sided, twelve-foot toboggan, tucked in with a buffalo robe. Beneath me, an inflated rubber mattress covered the floor boards. I wore all the appropriate clothing for winter dog-sled travel: long johns, woollen shirts, pants and parka.

Snowbird stood behind me on the tail end of the toboggan, hanging on to the handles. He talked to me and to the dogs at the same time. To the dogs it was 'click', 'hup' and 'jah'; to me it was comments on the many animal tracks that crossed the snow. Once we came across buffalo tracks a street wide, where four to five hundred animals had recently passed on their way to higher spring-feeding grounds. Snowbird said that on the previous trip they had seen several hundred bison — magnificent

John Dene's cabin in the abandoned village of Snowbird on the Athabasca River, where the travellers spent two nights.

animals weighing up to 2,500 pounds. On our tour we saw only two.

Nothing in the land escaped Snowbird. By the tracks in the snow, he could see wolves following a lame buffalo. He pointed out the tracks of moose and rabbits. He noted that the owls had eaten many mice; the bones were in the droppings. Ravens cawed above us from the tops of spruces.

'All dogs are individuals,' Snowbird said. He had a dog called 'Mama', who clearly yelled 'Mama' and chewed his harness in his eagerness to get going. Not even a cuff would dampen his enthusiasm. Snowbird tied his mouth shut until we started off. He used no whip, but at times he would break off and wave a willow twig. This was warning enough for his team.

Patrick Grandjam, a young Chipewyan driver, had a new lead dog that kept looking backwards and running sideways. We dubbed him 'Sidewinder'. He was useless as a leader and finally had to be chained to the back of the toboggan. Whenever Bob Reid got out, the dog would promptly jump onto the buffalo robe, looking very pleased. 'See, I got it made!'

At noon we stopped at an empty trapper's cabin, boiled the kettle over a woodstove for tea, and had lunch. Although hunting is prohibited in the national park, trappers are allowed to work their traplines and to have cabins within its boundaries. Buffalo may be shot outside the park, but the meat may not be offered for sale.

In the afternoon we crossed Lake Mamawi, a stretch of ten to twelve miles. We could barely see the far shore

because of its low subarctic growth. Small spruce trees had been cut and stuck into the snow at intervals to serve as markers to guide Indian trappers during storms and drifting snow.

The weather was clear, and during our March trip the temperature ranged between -10° and -25° C, except for the last morning when it dipped to -40° C before our departure from Fort Smith.

We made camp the first night out in a tent of two sections. The site was sheltered among alders along a small creek, some 18 miles from Fort Chipewyan. Two small campstoves were already glowing when we arrived and a good supply of firewood had been cut by John Dene who had gone ahead in his snowmobile. We had hot tea in enamel mugs and drank it as we peeled off our mitts, woollen caps, parkas and boots, to relax, sitting on our rolled-up sleeping bags. Then we gathered snow to melt down for more tea while Snowbird and Joe prepared the meal — strips of fried buffalo meat and fresh-baked bannock.

Bannock is the staple food of all Indians living in the bush. Flour is mixed with a bit of baking powder and a little water added. The mixture is kneaded and the inch-thick dough is spread into a larded frying pan. A wonderful, mouth-watering aroma slowly spreads through the tent as it bakes to a brown crust. For generations, trappers, hunters, prospectors, natives and whites alike, in the subarctic as well as the arctic regions, have lived on bannock and meat. We also carried frozen buffalo meat — shot outside the park's boundaries — hunks of moose meat, and a frozen wall-eyed pike. At the end of the journey, we even had rabbit (snared by Snowbird along the trail) and mallard duck shot the previous fall. Snowbird and Joe left the tent to feed the dogs, chained to bushes outside. Having run out of frozen fish the men prepared dog food in a big pail in a lean-to. Great howls filled the air as each animal got several scoops of food dumped on the clean snow.

Later we found room, though a bit crowded — there were nine of us — to spread our sleeping bags on the floor. As the fire died down, we took one last look outside. All the stars shone brightly; the northern lights flickered above, and far off a pack of wolves howled.

'The wolves are after the buffalo herds,' Snowbird commented.

Before lying down to sleep Snowbird prepared shavings, kindling and sticks and laid them next to him and the stove. It takes forethought and considerable experience to live and move about in the subarctic region, especially during the winter when one wrong move or misjudgement could soon bring disaster.

In spite of his age Snowbird was the first up in the morning and the last into his sleeping bag. Nimble, highly observant, but now equipped with bifocals (if he didn't lose them), he was always ready to share his vast bush knowledge. At nights he told us native legends and stories of encounters with wildlife. He listened with fascination when I told him of my experiences in the Antarctic.

On the second day we came to a splendid stand of two-foot thick spruce on a high bank above the Athabasca River. Appropriately, this tiny community where five shacks stood was named Snowbird. Here he had lived most of his life. Now it was abandoned, for the families had moved to Fort Chipewyan.

John Dene, however, still maintained a spacious trapper's cabin here. The place was very clean and cozy, and the cut-off oil-drum stove soon made the shack quite warm. The outhouse was just a short distance away.

A whiskey-jack or Canada jay promptly appeared outside the door demanding food. These birds become nearly tame and will sit on a trapper's shoulder, scolding and pecking at his cap. They are cherished winter companions to many people in remote and isolated locations.

The next morning was overcast. We looked at a shrouded, grey mysterious landscape of bush and frozen river and we chopped ice for tea from the river. Then we walked three miles downstream to a lonely trading post operated for some years by John and Edith Weeks. The place was called Embarras Portage (population 2) and had semi-monthly plane service and Alberta's most northeasterly post office. A middle-aged, quiet, pleasant couple who had come from Uranium City, Saskatchewan, they welcomed us to their small, warm store. They loved the northern forest and the isolation. In winter, planes on skis brought in their mail and the few boxes of groceries they had ordered. Their small business was supported by the few trappers who lived within a radius of 20-25 miles. They sold them basic groceries, bought their furs, cashed their cheques and even grubstaked them in the fall.

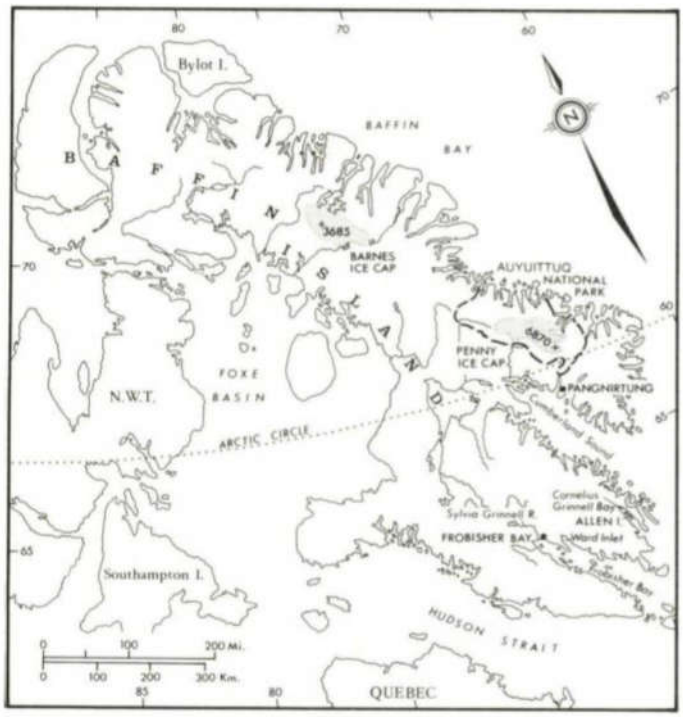
During our last night the stillness was suddenly broken when in unison our dogs set up a long eerie howl. Then as abruptly they stopped. Snowbird said 'They hear wolves and have a little talk'. As we turned back on the homeward stretch the dogs' pace increased, all feet tripping eagerly. We stopped for lunch, sitting companionably on a bed of spruce boughs in front of a fire and roasting strips of moose meat at the end of a stick.

Then partly retracing our steps we crossed the ice of Mamawi Lake, now in brilliant sunshine. The air was still and pure, a delight to inhale. Far off, we could see the few houses of Fort Chipewyan. Nothing could stop our dogs as they raced up to Snowbird's shack, snatching mouthfuls of snow to quench their thirst.

The next day we made our final goodbyes. We left with good memories and respect for the veterans of Canada's northern forests, and their simple, resourceful way of life. ◆

Summer at Ukkivik

By Marie Sanderson



Marie Sanderson is a professor of geography at the University of Windsor in Windsor, Ontario, and a past president of the Canadian Association of Geographers.

Photographs, unless otherwise credited, are by the author.

THE INUIT WORD *UKKIVIK* means 'the place where one spends the winter' but for the students in our Arctic summer course, Ukkivik is where they spent the summer. Ukkivik is a building in Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island, built by American military engineers during World War II. In 1942 there was concern that Allied troops might be evacuated from Europe, and the mile-long airstrip and military establishment at Frobisher were constructed to receive them. The building is on piles securely anchored in the permafrost and it contains all the modern conveniences — hot showers, cafeteria, gymnasium, even a bowling alley. Students attending high school in Frobisher Bay spend the winter here — it is their 'Ukkivik'. The owners, the Department of Education of the Northwest Territories, have allowed us to use the building for our summer course 'The Arctic Environment' for the past four years.

The idea of the course was developed in 1977 by John Jacobs and myself, colleagues in the department of geography at the University of Windsor. The purpose was to offer a university course in the Arctic for Inuit as well as southern students.

Other universities have taken southern students to the Arctic to study various aspects of science: for example Queen's University has a course in ornithology, and McGill University has recently begun a program for native classroom assistants. But Windsor's program, from the first, has been aimed at science education for both northerners and southerners.

John Jacobs had done climatic research in Baffin Island for several years and was sympathetic with the Inuit attitude — that they were not informed of the purpose or results of southern research in the Arctic. I had just returned from a visit to Yakutia in Russia — an area with many similarities to Canada's Northwest Territories — and had seen that the research and education there was usually the responsibility of native Yakuts. I contrasted this situation with that in Canada's North where few Inuit students graduate from high school and the number of Inuit university graduates is miniscule. We realized that the people of Yakutia have had contact with education systems for some 200 years and that north-south contact in Canada dates only from the mid-1940s. But we reasoned that taking a university course to the Arctic might help to introduce Inuit students to university life and perhaps interest them in going on to university in the South. The course was also open to southern students interested in the Arctic. What better place for them to study arctic phenomena?

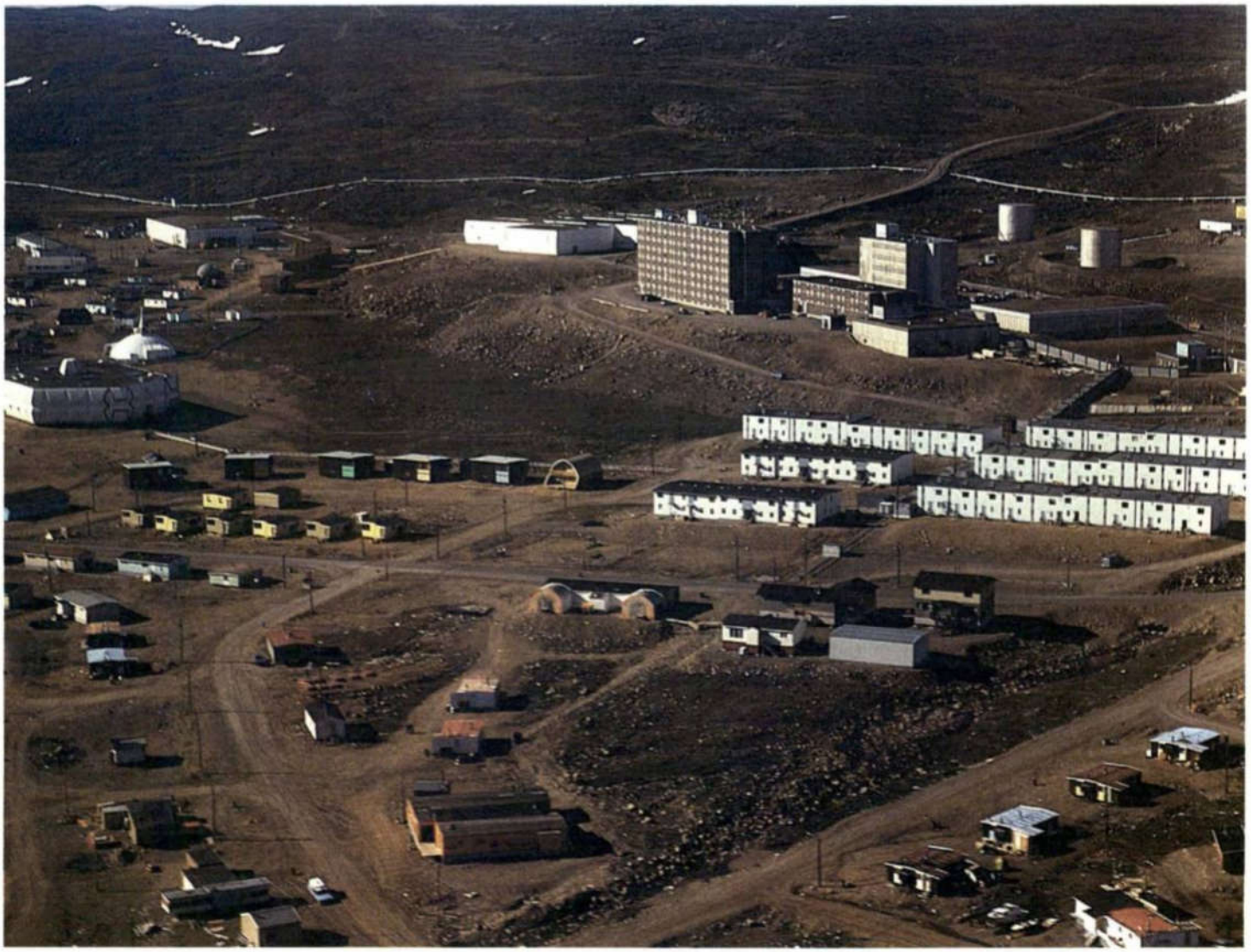
Frobisher Bay was chosen as the site for the course since it is the most accessible settlement in the Eastern Arctic. Nordair flights from Montreal operate daily during the summer and take only three hours for the 2,300-kilometre journey. Our course was given in July when southern Canada is hot and humid, while in Frobisher the average daily high temperature is about 10 °C (50 °F). Occasionally

the mercury reaches 17-18 °C (66 °F) but there is always a chance of snow. If there has been an early season, Frobisher Bay is free of ice. If the spring has been cold, the bay is still ice-covered when we arrive and sometimes when we leave at the end of the month. There is a good deal of cloud and drizzle in the summer but some days are dazzling, when the midnight sun shines non-stop in a brilliant blue sky. The hours when the sun appears to glide along the horizon are the most beautiful, with lovely long shadows giving a rosy-red colour to the landscape.

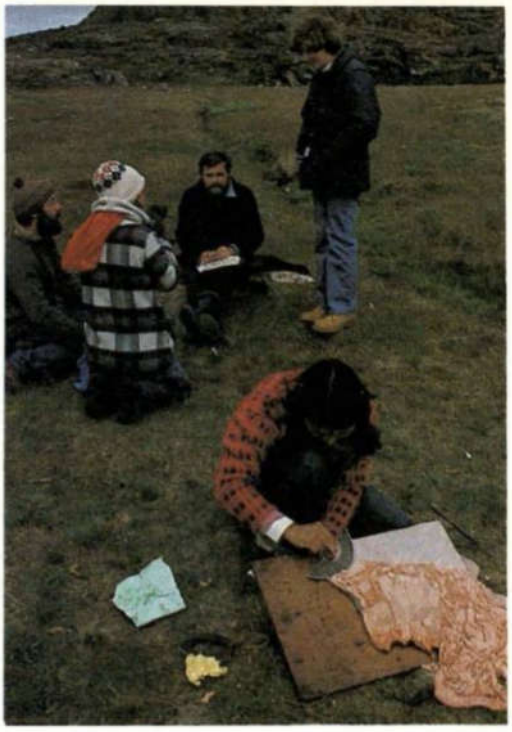
The settlement clings to the rocky hillside with concentric rings of streets rising to the largest and tallest building in Frobisher, an eight-storey high-rise. This building is modern and somehow out of context among the other one-storey frame houses. Frobisher has about 2,500 inhabitants, two-thirds of them Inuit. It is the administrative centre of the Eastern Arctic, with offices of the federal, territorial and municipal governments housed in the high-rise. This building, the social centre of the town, also contains an apartment complex, a hotel, the Hudson's Bay Company store, swimming pool and theatre. The town and bay were named for Martin Frobisher who sailed there from England in 1578, although he never reached the site of the present settlement. In the bay is an island called Frobisher's Farthest which marks the farthest west that he reached.

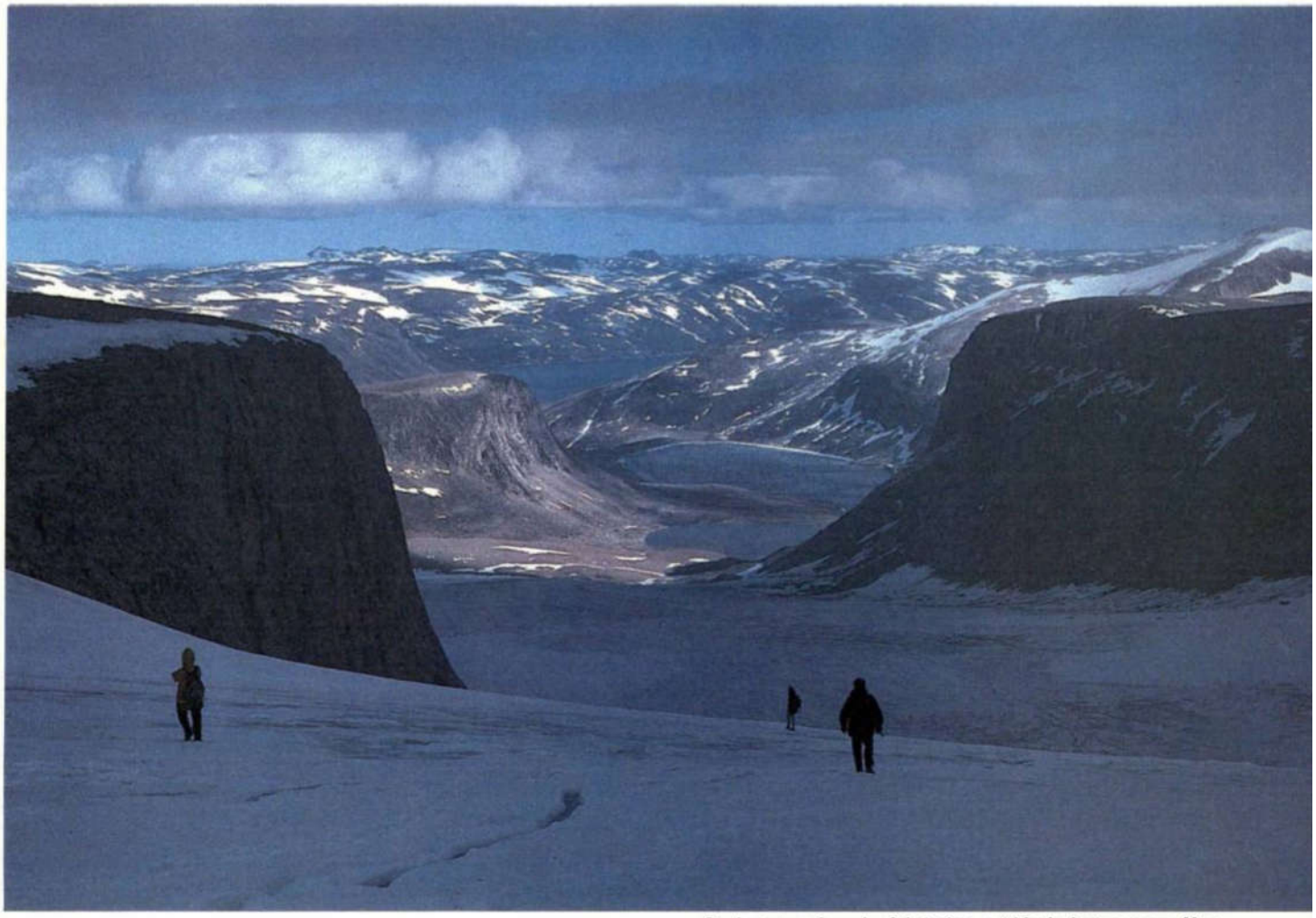
We call the course 'The Arctic Environment'. It is an introduction to many aspects of the physical environment: the land, the sea, the climate, the glaciers, the flora and fauna. Few lectures are given and most of the time is given to field work.

Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island, from the air. The 'high-rise' complex is in the upper right. The two large white buildings are the elementary and high schools.



Simonie Alainga, an Inuit member of the teaching staff, demonstrates the skinning and cleaning of a beluga whale. Right: an ulu is used to scrape a skin at Iqalugajuit.



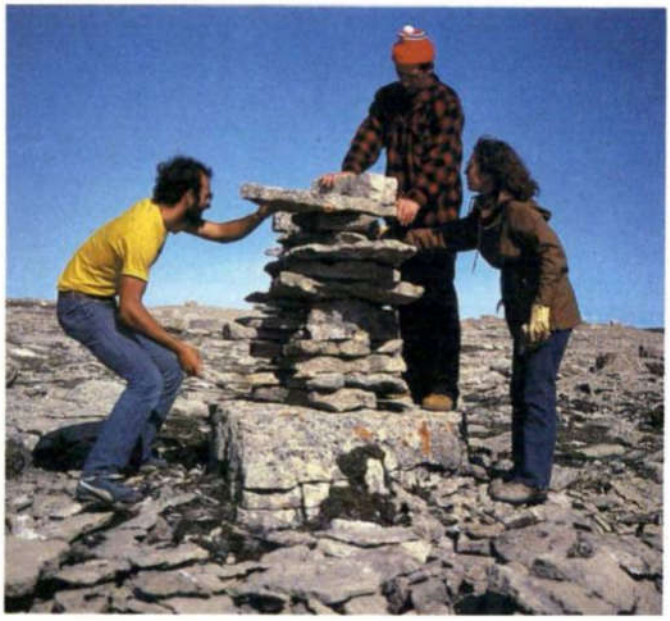


Students spend much of their time outside the lecture room. Here several walk on a small permanent ice field on Allen Island.

Such an interdisciplinary course requires the expertise of many specialists. In addition to Dr Jacobs and me — both climatologists by training — the teaching staff has included Windsor biologist Paul Hebert and geologist Mike Sklash; Giff Miller, a glaciologist from the University of Colorado; and Phil Howarth, a geomorphologist from McMaster University. The teaching staff also included Simonie Alainga, one of the leaders of the Inuit community at Frobisher. The students enjoyed his lectures on how the Inuit view the environment, which Simonie preferred to give in his native Inuktitut. His comments were translated into English by two Inuit students.

Some of the northern students have been Inuit and some white; teachers, adult educators, university students, government employees and housewives. One graduate is Peter Ittinuar who has become the first Inuit member of the House of Commons. The southern students have included undergraduates in geography, biology, geology and environmental studies from universities in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba. We have had graduate students in biology, chemistry, geology, geography and one from the Weather Service in Washington. High school geography teachers also come to the course; they want to see the arctic areas they teach about in their classes.

For many generations the Inuit have built inukshuks as beacons in a treeless landscape. Here, students from the South try their hand at building an inukshuk.



Lectures are held mostly in the morning. We try to be on the tundra as much as possible, and the field exercises usually require some hiking. First the group maps a small lake by pace and compass survey, an old but trustworthy method of mapping with a minimum of equipment. The maps produced often bear little resemblance to the real lake but the exercise is a good introduction to the landscape. Then the students measure air and soil temperature, solar radiation, wind and humidity, and visit the Atmospheric Environment Service offices which record the official weather statistics. The AES personnel show the students how the weather balloons are released and tracked. Also based in Frobisher is an ice reconnaissance aircraft. The group is shown around the plane and hears how the ice patrol maps the icepack to assist ships that sail the northern waters.

A visiting hydrologist from the Water Survey of Canada shows students how the flow of the nearby rivers is measured. The Sylvia Grinnell River is near Frobisher; the beautiful river was named for the daughter of Henry Grinnell, the American patron of two Franklin search expeditions. Some students wondered about the importance of the subject — the amount of water running off the land. Then they were told that Frobisher depended on such water for its municipal supply and that running water is rather scarce in the Arctic.

Rocks are identified and the formation of periglacial phenomena is discussed — the mud boils, mass movement of surface material caused by freezing and thawing of water, and the permafrost itself, just a metre below the surface. Northerners accept these features as com-

Pangnirtung Fiord

Karl-Heinz Raach

Fishing for Arctic char at Iqalugajuit on Ward Inlet.

monplace parts of the landscape, and interest in the scientific explanations is not automatic. 'Why do we need to know what is beneath the ground when we walk on the surface?' The question challenges the professors to justify the purpose of their research.

The area is filled with evidence of the last ice age and the most obvious are the boulders perched on the ridgetops. However, some northern students are not convinced that ice once covered the land and suggest that the Great Spirit may have placed the rocks atop the hills as markers, just as today's northerners place inukshuks or stone markers to help them find their way.

During our stay in the Arctic, we try to become part of the community. We visit the research laboratory of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and tour the ship *Calanus*, a veteran in oceanographic arctic research, having been used for some 30 years. We usually visit the excellent little local museum which is housed in the former liquor store. It became a museum after the community petitioned the government to ban the sale of alcohol in Frobisher Bay in the mid 1970s. On Sundays, members of our group attend the Catholic or Anglican churches. The services are in Inuktitut, and when we know the hymns, we sing along in English. The Anglican church in Frobisher is igloo-shaped, carefully built and decorated with sealskin kneelers and a cross made from narwhal tusks.

Each year one field trip to some other less developed part of the Arctic is scheduled. There are no roads, so travel must be by boat or aircraft. The first year we chartered a locally owned fishing boat and travelled some 70 miles down Frobisher Bay to Ward Inlet. The Inuit favour this area for hunting and fishing, and several families were already camped there. We watched them catch and skin beluga whales and many ring seals. Fishing was good; we caught some delicious Arctic char. Next morning we found that trying to take a bath in the icy waters of arctic streams is one of the less desirable aspects of tundra camping.

Another year the group chartered a Twin Otter aircraft based at Frobisher and flew east to Allen Island. Although maps of the area show this as a settlement, only a few Inuit families live here as members of an outpost camp. Landing at Allen Island was an experience not to be forgotten, since the runway is so called only because the largest boulders have been cleared away and some oil drums mark the end of the landing strip. The students on this trip camped near a permanent ice field and walked on a remnant of the last great ice age.

Pangnirtung is the favourite field-trip location. Located on Cumberland Sound north of Frobisher, Pangnirtung is the embarkation point for Auyuittuq National Park. This huge wilderness park, which includes the Penny Ice Cap, has truly magnificent scenery and has attracted climbers and hikers from all over the world. The park boundary is some 48 kilometres from Pangnirtung, at the end of Pangnirtung Fiord. Boats can be hired at Pangnirtung to take the hikers to the park, but from that point movement is by foot, and food and equipment must be back-packed. There is no time in a three-week course to enter the park but we fly over it, to see the spectacular glacial scenery, and we explore the area around Pangnirtung. The runway in Pangnirtung is the main street of the hamlet, and although there are barriers in place, the inhabitants like to take a short-cut across the landing strip so there is usually someone scuttling out of the way when an aircraft approaches. Steel cables anchor the roofs of the houses as protection against the gale-force winds which sweep down the fiord from the ice fields and which a few years ago, damaged the Hudson's Bay store and blew the contents of many cases miles down the fiord.

The group studies microclimate and vegetation at Pangnirtung. It also visits the sewing centre and weaving shop. The weavers of Pangnirtung are becoming famous for the traditional designs and beautiful colours of their tapestries. A prized possession of mine is a wall hanging by Malaya Akulukjuk of Pangnirtung, depicting a mythical bird, with caribou hands and human feet.

The individual research project required of each student is an important part of the course. The student chooses a project which involves some form of original research. Topics have covered many subjects from every aspect of the physical environment to a comparison of infant mortality in Pangnirtung and Igloolik.

One of the most interesting research papers was written by Ann Meekitjuk Hanson of Frobisher Bay during the first year of the course, pertaining to our field trip to Ward Inlet. Ann wrote of the history of the area where we camped, known to the Inuit as 'Iqalugajuit' or 'the place of young fish'.

> Iqalugajuit is still very much part of the people and the people are part of Iqalugajuit in a sense that no words can fully express. Even though our life styles have changed with modern times, we will continue to hang on to our culture and language.... To maintain our heritage, we must make sure that no man-made damage is done to Iqalugajuit.*

This camping area, Ann said, was especially favoured by women and children because of its hills, beautiful scenery, fresh-water lake, the sound of rushing water and the abundance of game. Inuit women have named it 'Kajanaqtuq' — which translated means 'beauty in fond memories'.

It was rewarding to see northern and southern students learning together and sharing their concerns. It would be a pity if this type of course were discontinued and Inuit as well as southern students were denied the possibility of working together. ◆

**Taken from a published part of Ann Hanson's paper 'Iqalugajuit', in 'Inuktitut', Spring, 1978, pp. 54-58.*

NORTH OF REINDEER

The 1940 Trip Journal of Prentice G. Downes

Edited and Introduced by R. H. Cockburn

IN THE SUMMER OF 1936, Prentice G. Downes, a teacher of Latin, geomorphology and history at Belmont Hill School near Boston, began travels in the Canadian North that made his name familiar from the Eastern Arctic to the Mackenzie.

Downes was first drawn to the North by reading Napoleon Comeau's *Life and Sport on the North Shore of the Lower St. Lawrence,* a territory that he visited in 1935 and 1936. His passion for the North having become obsessive, he took passage aboard the Hudson's Bay Company ship *Nascopie* from Montreal to Churchill in 1936 and then, with a Cree companion, canoed from Pelican Narrows to Reindeer Lake. He returned by canoe to Reindeer Lake in 1937 before boarding the *Nascopie* that August for the voyage on which occurred the momentous meeting with the *Aklavik* in Bellot Strait and the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Ross. The following year, Downes travelled with Indians from Ile à la Crosse to Waterways and then on by himself, in a 13'4" canoe, to Fitzgerald; from there he went by boat to Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes. This 1938 trip was something of an aberration, for it was the region to the north of Reindeer Lake that held the greatest allure for him, and it was there in 1939 that he canoed and mapped the route from Brochet to Nueltin and Windy lakes, the feat recorded in his book *Sleeping Island,* published in 1943.

In the vernacular of his day, Downes was a 'hard' traveller. He would carry only flour, baking powder, salt, sugar, lard, tea, tobacco, and when he could get it, pemmican. The rest of his outfit consisted of a trolling line and spoon, a rifle, two-pound axe, file, jack-knife, floating dial compass, frying pan and tea pail, small sewing kit, 'lots of heavy string', ambroid and cotton cloth for patching his canoe, binoculars, a camera and film, matches, a small bottle of iodine for medical emergencies, a light sleeping robe, a tarpaulin, and 'the best procurable' mosquito bar (he disdained tents). Lastly, he always brought with him hard pencils and several small brown notebooks.

Prentice Downes with caribou meat at Sandy Hill, Kasmere Lake, July 1940. He was then 31 years of age.

For however hard the going, Downes kept detailed day-to-day journals of each of his trips, and in them are to be found evidence not only of his depth of feeling for the North but also of his diverse talents and interests. He was an accomplished geologist, cartographer and naturalist, and an amateur but discerning ethnologist who studied the histories, languages, and ways of the Crees and the Chipewyans. Above all, he sought to understand the significance of dreams in the culture of the Northern Crees, one of whose names for him was 'The-man-who-talks-about-dreams'. Also, fondly inspired by his inquiries into their past, the Indians from Pelican Narrows to Southend called him 'Mimigwesso' after their mythical creature with a flat face who lives in the rocks. His journals are rich in Indian lore and anecdotes, and to one who has been privileged to follow these diaries chronologically, it is a moving experience to read in the 1947 notebook of Downes's reunions with

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Professor Cockburn, chairman of the department of English at the University of New Brunswick, guides canoe trips for Headwaters, of Temagami, Ontario. He is editing the northern journals of P.G. Downes with a view to publishing them as a book, and would welcome recollections of Prentice Downes from any readers who knew him or may have heard accounts of him.

Wading the canoe up the Little Partridge. Above, caribou crossing the Kasmere River.

so many of his former travelling companions and other Cree friends. He had spent the war years working for the United States Army Map Service, far from the people and the land that had come to mean so much to him.

The journal extracts presented here are from Downes's last major trip, that of 1940, when it was his aim to reach Kasba Lake by way of the Little Partridge — or Thebayazie — River, which empties into the north-western arm of Kasmere Lake and has its headwaters on the height of land south of Kasba: this was the route followed by J.B. Tyrrell on his epic exploration of 1894*. Downes and his companion, a fifty-five-year-old trapper from Brochet named Alfred Peterson, left Brochet in a seventeen-foot Chestnut Prospector on 10 July. After going upstream on the wrong river out of Kasmere on the 21st — Downes mapped it and named it 'Doubt River' — they finally located the correct route on 23 July. The going was brutally hard. No rain to speak of had fallen since break-up and the Little Partridge, boulder-strewn and laced with rapids, was very low. On the 26th, with Tyrrell's 'Roosevelt Hill' in sight, Downes, much to his chagrin, decided to turn back. They had dragged, lined, or portaged nearly all the way, with Downes carrying the canoe and the better part of the loads; Alfred, feeling his years and, in Downes's words, too 'domesticated', wanted to quit. Returning downstream, they covered in a day and a half the distance it had taken them four days to travel going up. We join Downes in his last camp on the Little Partridge.

**See Tyrrell's 'Report of the Doobaunt, Kazan and Ferguson Rivers and the North-West Coast of Hudson Bay' in Geological Survey of Canada Annual Report (New Series), Vol IX, 1896.*

July 27th

This place is one of the most beautiful camping spots of my northern experience. It is on a low esker — open sand in the midst of a small copse of birch. We face the setting sun and a long lake-expansion, while, being on the 'elbow' of two lakes, we have one running directly to the south also. The shore is sand and here we have sand carpeted with moss and the small heather-like ground growth of the north. It is an utterly and absolutely calm night.

Alfred found a bear skull, very whitened and old, hanging up in a birch. This was an old Cree (I am not sure if the Chips [Chipewyans] did likewise) custom out of respect for 'old grandfather'. There is little I can write now, except such random notes as occur to me in retrospect. Possibly nothing now will fill these pages but my own miserable introspection. I refused to go on beyond this nice spot. I wish to wait for the deer a little, and on this occasion my say goes. So we have not entirely left the Kasba-dessé — or Thébay-azie.

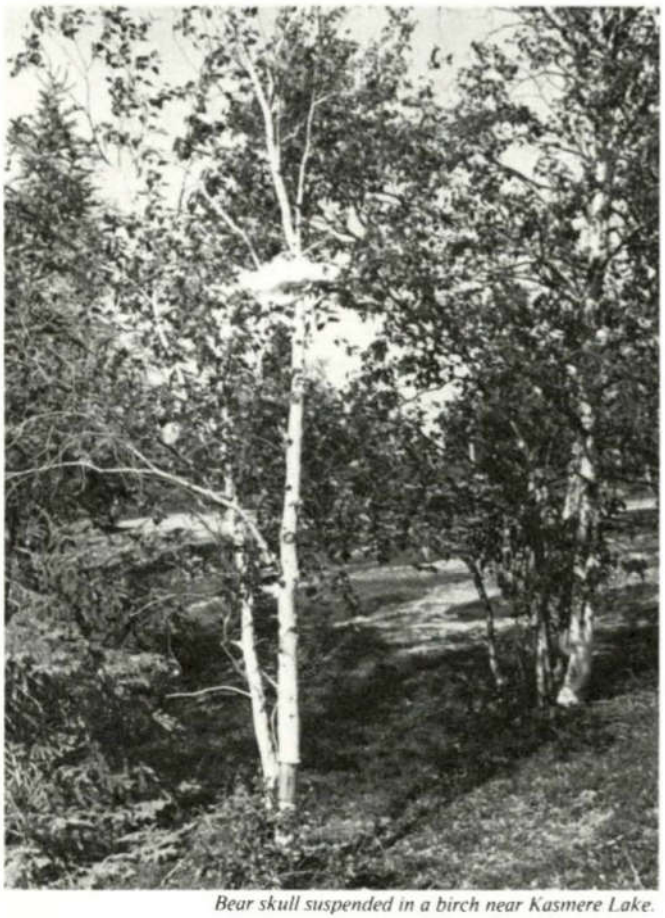
July 28th

Killed first caribou. Ah, the North, Land of the Unexpected! I awoke early, and as I lay under the mosquito bar I heard the most peculiar noise — sort of a 'plopping' sound, very persistent. At first I thought it was large drops of rain, and looking out I saw a blue sky. The sound persisted and I at length looked around through the mosquito netting and saw a huge dark figure a few feet away. Through my startled and sleepy brain it finally dawned that it was a big buck caribou — then, not one, but a whole herd. They were all around us,

some not twenty feet away. Quietly they cropped the low leaves of the birches and it was this sound which I had heard.

I crept out of the mosquito bar as quietly as I could. They moved slowly on. In underwear and bare feet I went after them, but they moved on out of range before I could find the rifle. Then I heard a noise down the lake and enjoyed the wonderful spectacle of seeing 47 bucks swimming across the narrows in a long single line. It was magnificent in the early morning light. I awakened Alfred and we watched with the glasses while 27 more swam over. As we turned from contemplating this, we saw some caribou off in the scrub. I grabbed the rifle and we both crept after them. At last I saw a big, fat, dark buck ranging across us. I fired and he dropped instantly. It was a clean good shot, and difficult, for the sun was shining against me and he was half hidden.

He was nicely fat and we ate the liver for breakfast. Later, when cutting him up, a band of 30 or more came right down upon us and I clicked with the camera until they went off. For the next hour or so we continued to see them here and there — all snuffing and snorting and moving south. My hunch and pet theory about eskers and caribou paid dividends in this case at least, and my insistence that we stop here was rewarded. We took the hindquarters, kidneys, tongue, and brisket. By 10 a.m. they had ceased to appear. All the world was as quiet and devoid of any sign of life as when we had arrived. They simply had vanished. So it is in the north — the true land of feast and famine.



Bear skull suspended in a birch near Kasmere Lake.

Shortly after this we went downriver. My map proved accurate and handy. We ran three rapids up which we had painfully come. There was not a sign or a track of a deer. We are just ahead of them. Through the heat of the day they lie and and we travel on. We came into the first lake after the falls (previous to Kasmere Lake) and boiled up on the esker point. The most confusing part of the entire route is here; but a cone-shaped bare island, which has been burned over and is a distinct red colour, is a fine mark. It is indicated on my map and I call it Red Hat Island, as it looks just like that. It was very hot and still, with just the suggestion of a breeze from the east. We have had extraordinary weather.

We crossed the lake and made the last of the Thebayazie River portages. This is an extremely bad one, full of angular boulders. Then we paddled across to our old main camp — the High Sandhill. In our short absence the water in the lake has dropped some inches. It is not to be wondered at. We boiled up the brisket for supper, and I busied myself with photographs. Unfortunately, I had the black & white in for my caribou shots and I am most anxious to get some colour pictures of them. From the hooves of the one I shot, it would look as if they are fresh from the Barrens.

Our good fortune of the day was not to end without one more stroke. While roaming about, Alfred found an old Hudson's Bay [Company] axe. It is in excellent shape — rusty but still sharp and one of the old models. Even the haft is perfectly usable. It takes the place of the one lost on the Cochrane. Out of all the places one has camped in the north, out of all the scenes and incidents, there always seem to be a few that stand out particularly vividly for some perhaps trivial reason. In this respect, the camp on the Slave among the poplars and birches [1938 trip] will always be with me, and I think too that last camp on the Thebayazie. This camp here on the High Sandhill also has pleasant associations.

About 8 p.m. the deer began to come. They were moving east. Before long they were passing right next to us. We paced off the distance to the spot that one group fed about. It was exactly 40 paces. From then on they continued to pass constantly. The very forest was literally alive with them. They make a curious crackling noise, apparently the toes of the hoofs. They passed steadily but with pauses to feed on the birch leaves. Long after we turned in I could hear them. Sometimes, something scaring them, a whole band would break into a gallop

and then, with one's ear to the ground, it sounded like distant thunder.

July 29th

Neither of us slept very well for the constant passing of the deer a few yards from us, so we were up by 5 a.m. The deer were still passing, sometimes within 20 feet or less. There were some fine great bucks with giant antlers. Alfred is quite right, I believe, in his claim that the scent of the green foliage and grass is so strong they do not smell one at this time of year. On and on they marched — big white bucks scarcely shed at all of their winter hair — young dark yearlings, barren does — the great grey phantom army of the north.

Now 9 a.m., all is quiet: not a sound or sign of them. They have vanished.

As a gentle southwest breeze began to blow, a heavy pall of smoke began to spread over everything — bush fires to the southwest, somewhere on the Sunrise Lake quadrant, I expect. Very shortly we set out again. Our purpose is now to map the north arm of Kasmere Lake and something of the east arm, particularly the north shore and its complex of islands which I was unable to do last year, then go on and fill in the Putahow River route, which is quite incorrect upon my map. To this end we paddled back down the lake, which seemed much shorter than when we came up. It has a shape considerably at variance with Tyrrell's map. . . . We reached the eastern extremity and ran down the rapids of Kasmere River, bringing back memories of last year. We boiled the kettle on the esker at the first turn of the river, not far from where John and I boiled up last year enroute to Nueltin.

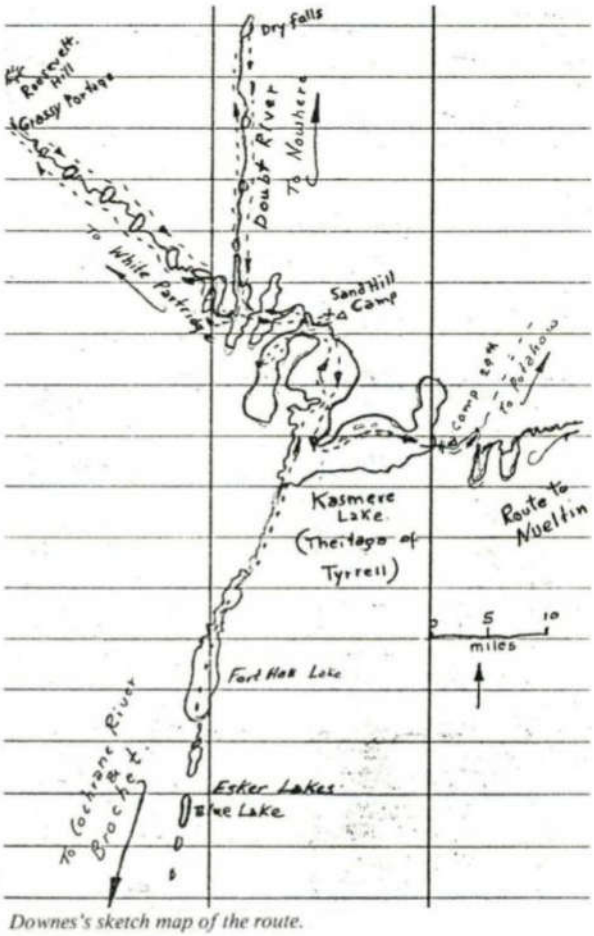
The whole esker was littered with tracks. This spot is a fine place and excellent crossing. We thought we saw a campfire smoke, and as Eskimo Charlie (Charles Planinshek) was supposed to be in the vicinity we paddled down to the big bisected esker. We found no Charlie but had a splendid sight of deer swimming the crossing: 127 in three bunches have swum across in the last three hours. We must have seen in the last two days a thousand deer or more. Few white men indeed have had the privilege I have had in these last three days.

July 30th

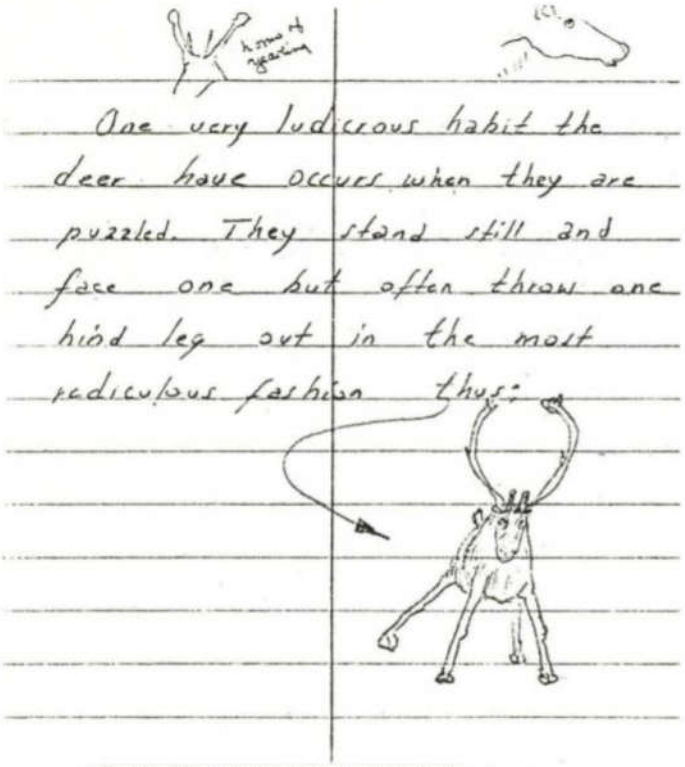
Very smoky; wind gentle southwest. Today has been caribou day for me. It has been extremely smoky — indeed, the visibility is that of a day of dense fog. The sun has been entirely obscured at times and at others it is but a great copper disc.

Caribou were still crossing in the morning. Fawns and does are now numerous. I secreted myself in the willows along the shore and shot picture after picture. From my hideaway I got the deer just as they emerged from the water. They posed and passed literally within five feet of me, so something should show despite the darkness.

Alfred Peterson, a trapper from Brochet who was Downes's companion on the trip.



Downes's sketch map of the route.


One very ludicrous habit the
deer have occurs when they are
puzzled. They stand still and
face one but often throw one
hind leg out in the most
ridiculous fashion thus:

Section of a page from Downes's journal.

In fact, one big buck entirely obscured the view-finder. It has been a thrilling thing — first to hear them coming at a distance and then having them swim across directly to one and get out of the water; they stop, shake themselves, the cows grunt, the calves give a bleat or two, then they clamber up the steep slope beside me so close I could jump and grab a fawn. There is great individual difference in their appearance. Some of the bucks are still almost white with winter hair. Some of the younger ones are dark chocolate and in full summer coat. Some are very mottled. The little fawns are a tawny buckskin hue. As they swim, the head is well above water and tilted upward, the horns lying back; the tail, just a tuft, also rides above the water. They swim powerfully and without noise — (two are coming now). Having 'snapped' them, I go on. They are almost semi-aquatic in habit — swimming from point to point, island to island, in long strings. When a large band crosses, it seems usually that one takes the lead considerably in advance of the others.

Certainly this is the very best time of year to see them, for the Indians and white men are all out of this part of the country. The white trappers are pretty much all 'outside' and the Indians are at Brochet, as 'Treaty' was paid there the 26th. So there are no loose dogs or blood-crazy killers. This experience illustrates how vulnerable the deer are at certain times of the year. Right here with .22 or a spear I could have killed hundreds — and if I was a Chip or a white trapper with dogs, that is just what would have happened, for they come in bands of up to 60 animals and at intervals — sometimes an hour apart. Each takes the same course as its predecessor.

Alfred has busied himself at the camp making a new axe handle for the new-found axe — it broke in half last night — and sewing up odds and ends. My moose-skin moccasins, though new at the start, are completely worn through. Fortunately Alec [Alex Mackintosh, H B C post manager at Brochet] gave me an old pair as I left.

It is extremely pleasant sitting here in this little opening, waiting for the deer. As I write, a couple of sparrow-like small birds hop about me in the alders as terns dive and make their harsh cry of victory. Now and then mergansers wing by with whirring wings and a grayling breaks the surface of the water. Due no doubt to the extraordinary and long drought, the mosquitos are not unbearable; in fact there are comparatively few of them. As it is now noon, the deer have slowed up in their passage but I do not believe they are entirely done in crossing, though of course how many days they have been passing here we do not know.

This whole experience has been a delightful, thrilling, and unexpected one, particularly in recollection that last year I did not see a deer until August 2nd, and then far to the north at Windy Lake.

As one sits in such silent solitude he cannot but be conscious of the pulsating life of the forest; the constant stirring of small birds, the continual drone of flies, the buzz of insects of all varieties. He looks down at his clothing, and small winged or legged insects are crawling about. On the ground among the rocks, the moss and sand is alive with ants and lesser bugs, each determinedly going about his business. In the water, hundreds of tiny fish dart here and there. In the very bark of the trees are crawling, creeping insects. Birds pass, and then the caribou. One cannot but wonder, and speculate what is the purpose. Is there any purpose to the individual life of all these creatures, and of us?

One very ludicrous habit the deer have occurs when they are puzzled. They stand still and face one but often throw one hind leg out to the side in the most ridiculous fashion. I have noticed this ungainly posture a number of times and with numerous individuals.

The last bunch of 19 or so which crossed is the first one to turn back after landing. As usual, it was led by a doe. One of the does started to come right into the opening where I sit and actually sniffed about at one of my feet which was sticking out. Going on beyond me, she picked up some stray breeze and jumped back into the water. The whole bunch then stood in indecision and at length turned back. It will be interesting to see, now with a wet trail on the other side, if the next band crosses or not.

I finally left my hide-out after another group turned back. Some shift in wind has revealed me.

July 31st

We awoke early to the rumble of thunder and hastily improvised a shelter. The rain was but a brief spattering. Deer continued to pass, mostly big bucks. The Eskimos have a theory that the passing of deer brings thunderstorms. This ingenious notion had probably grown out of the fact that when a herd of deer are on the move and rubbing against one another, considerable frictional or static electricity is set up in their hair and sparks can be seen. Probably atmospheric conditions which produce thunderstorms also influence the deer to move — in any case the two hypotheses stand.

The smoke does not seem quite as thick today as it has previously been. We are waiting on the weather somewhat as to whether we go on or not.

Alfred is fifty-five years old, born December 13, 1885. It does not seem possible that he can be as old as that. We may find it necessary to kill another deer as we have eaten up the last of the one I shot. Of the various manners of preparing meat, I prefer it roasted. I find the marrow of the big thigh bone excellent. Alfred tells me the old Chips always used to cut up and eat the heavy main cord or sinew which runs through the leg, in the belief that it made them tough and strong.

We lingered about, waiting on the weather. Then we set out for Putahow River. I was anxious to get this route in as it should help me to tie in my map to fixed points. [R. Glenn] Madill [of the Dominion Observatory Expedition] in 1922 made a 'fix' at the big rapids going into Putahow Lake. With the establishment of Putahow River as the 'Willow River' of that report, I have now another fix. The whole map will have to be done over again and should be infinitely more complete and accurate.

We left our camp near the deer crossing — passed through to the east side of the big esker and turned north. We followed a long narrow bay of the Kasmere River. There are some fine camping spots in this stretch on the west side. The east side is low and muskeg. After some two and three-quarter miles we came to the end of the bay and made a fairly long portage to a small lake. This was crossed and after some difficulty the portage was located almost straight across from the one we had come out upon. We portaged to another small pond and crossed to the northeast corner and portaged again to still another small pond and made a portage out of the nw. corner to a large lake. The portage comes out on a muskeg flat and ends abruptly on a high muskeg cutbank down which the canoe must be lowered. We continually saw deer en route. This lake we were destined to follow a long distance. ... Going north (mag.) and slightly east, we travelled six and a half miles and here the Putahow (Nipsis-seepee) comes in from the west through a bay and lake expansion so that it is not noticeable but that at a narrows here one runs a brief stretch of fast water.

Caribou crossing the Kasmere.

By this time thunder, which had grumbled intermittently all day, now broke and very black clouds rolled over us from the south. We hastily made shore on some greasy, slippery rocks and the storm broke in all the sudden fury of these northern bursts. We made a hurried shelter and huge fire.

After an hour or two we renewed our course. The loading of the canoe was dangerous and precarious owing to the extraordinarily slippery rocks. We went on eleven more miles in the same general direction, though bending east. The last three miles found the lake expansion widening out into a large lake. ... After the large expansion the river took on more of a river-like appearance and left the north end to swing west and then northeast. A fast water stretch found it breaking away from the esker, turning east and northeast and resulting in a long rapid, possibly two and a half miles in length, to Putahow Lake. We searched for the portage and walked the length of the rapid, or rather the succession of rapids. The water was very low and they appeared to be nasty — not so swift, but impeded by rocks so that it did not seem feasible to run them. As far as I was concerned we had come sufficiently far anyway, as there was no particular reason to go into Putahow Lake.

Alfred was in the group when Madill made his observation, which was on a rocky knoll overlooking the lake near the end of the portage. This was as far as I need go to tie it in with my map. We searched about on the knoll, then Alfred, who had got some distance from me, began

The H B C vessel 'Lac du Brochet' in which Downes travelled from Brochet to Southend.

shouting. I ran over to him expecting he had either found the mark or had hurt himself. When I got to him he pointed out a canoe on the other shore of the lake. He was sure it was Charlie Planinshek's whom we had half expected to meet somewhere along the route.

We went down the hill to the shore. Someone shouted back and started to paddle over a small bay in the southwest corner of the lake. It was Charlie — known through the North as 'Eskimo Charlie'. He was surprised to see us, and we paddled to the other side with him.

He had been working in a small garden he had created on the lake shore and which he had guarded from the depredations of any wandering Chips by a skull (human, and Chipewyan) mounted on a stick. Some digression upon this extraordinary character is in order. 'Eskimo Charlie', or Charles Planinshek, is a Slav of some sort. He came into the North many years ago — about 1907. Among other things he is known as the greatest [hot air merchant] in the country. He is now over 60. He has not been outside for 8 years — since he returned from a really remarkable trip by canoe from Windy Lake to the Gulf of Mexico, then around the inside passage to Florida, and up the coast to New York and Montreal. He was married to a Pelican Narrows Cree and took his two half-breed children along with him. The country is full of tales of Charlie's escapades. He was arrested and in jail a few years ago for using poison baits. He at one time captured and attempted to train caribou as draft animals. He has always been noted for his fine gardens, and this one was no exception. B-s'er or not, the fact remains he is an extraordinarily ingenious and clever man, with a good mind, and the dirtiest looking human, sartorially and otherwise I have ever seen. The Chipewyans hate him as much as he hates them, which is very considerable.

I was amazed to see what he had done at his place which was located some distance back from the shore on the other side of the esker. He had cleared all brush and trees for many acres, constructed a corral (for caribou originally), and had a small garden. This one was protected by another skull, Eskimo I should judge from the high central cranial ridge. He had stacks and stacks of firewood piled up. Each stack made a temporary home for a dog. Further, he had diverted a small stream to flow near his shack so that he would not have to go far for water. In the yard was an extraordinary contraption made of four old Ford wheels, tires and all, which was fitted with a whiffle-tree and harness. He had a tiny cabin — quite a contrast to the obvious tremendous labour-expended evidence of the outside surroundings. Inside it was dark (not a window) and indescribably dirty.

In appearance he was a very small, round-shouldered man with a black beard and blue eyes curiously slanted downward at the corners. His clothing consisted of a pair of rubbers, no socks, a very patched and torn pair of pants, and two or three shirts black with mud and sweat. His speech was heavily accented but well-expressed and intelligent.

We talked in generalities and then he wished to hear the European news. He was astounded to hear what we had to say (having seen no one since Easter, when he was in at Brochet). Even our news was three weeks old, and God knows what has happened in that interim. He was the first human we had seen in 21 days. Eventually we paddled back to our camp on the other side of the portage and Charlie walked over. We chatted there for a while, mostly about foreign affairs, and then it began to cloud up and thunder, so he left. It was an interesting meeting, and I had heard so much about him from time to time that I was glad to run into him. He certainly did not impress me as unfavourably as the talk of others had suggested he would. We planned to pull out and head south the next day, the wind being favourable.

August 1st

It was threatening and drizzling in the morning so we put off our return and walked over to Charlie's. I took a number of photographs of the place — one of the amazing spectacle of his five dogs racing like mad and Charlie bouncing up and down on his 'buckboard'. He was very enthusiastic about 'his esker' and the general matter of them. The 'highways of the North', he calls them, and he is not far wrong . . . . He reminisced about his famous trip. He is a trifle given to exaggeration as to the great crowds which welcomed him, I feel, and extremely vain about everything connected with it, which is justifiable. Talking to him I was struck by his manner

and that of Hornby which had been described to me by people who knew the latter.

He drew me a map of Putahow and Poor Fish. I have established one other 'fix' and that is the puzzling 'Canoe Limit' of the Carnegie [Terrestrial Magnetic Observations] 1908 report. Unquestionably that spot was the site of the old H B C warehouse here on the lake. For this was as far as the freighters went by canoe with the material for Ennadai Lake Post. It was then freighted overland in winter with dogs. In fact I should now be able to check all or almost all of the known 'fixes'.

We finally left about 1 p.m. and turned south with 'good luck' to Charlie. I wonder if he was sorry or felt at all lonely to see us leave? I did not look back, as some fast water soon engaged our attention.

On their return journey, Downes and Peterson met the northward-bound Chipewyans on Jackfish Lake (Lac Brochet), and were greeted with the question, 'Idthen-lu?' — 'where are the deer?' With the Indians were Fred Schweder and his son Charles, with whom Downes had stayed on Windy Lake in the previous year; Schweder had now left the employ of the H B C and was heading back to the mouth of the Windy River as a free trader. Downes reached Brochet on 9 August: 'As we came through the small narrows and the red roofs of the Company buildings came into view, veiled by the haze and smoke, I had the usual sinking sensation of regret that it was now once more over.' He travelled to Southend in the Company's *Lac du Brochet*, then continued on to Pelican Narrows by canoe, where he spent some days visiting with white and Indian friends before going out to Beaver (Amisk) Lake: there he left his canoe with Harry Moody,* and there he would find it waiting for him in 1947.

Sequel

As far as one can determine, the only white travellers to follow the Little Partridge route to Kasba Lake and the Kazan between Tyrrell's day and Downes's were Thierry Mallet and Del Simons in 1926. Since Downes's attempt, there have been several trips by white men up the Little Partridge, most notably those led by George Luste in 1974 and Hugh Stewart in 1980. Downes's companion, Alfred Peterson, died in 1950.

In 1947, Downes learned the details of Eskimo Charlie's death, and something more of his life. Charlie was found dead in his bunk in his hovel on Putahow in 1945 by RCMP Constable Marcel Chappuis. According to Harry Moody and others, Charlie had been dead 18 months. Chappuis buried him there, placing on his grave flowers that the recluse himself had grown in his garden. Downes, looking through the Trinity Church records at Stanley Post later that summer, came across a 'curious thing', and that evening he wrote in his journal: 'I found here that Charlie was married in 1915 to an Indian woman, Mary (?) Ballantyne. He gave his age then as 32, which, assuming it two years or so ago when he died, made him over 60. The most interesting thing was the place of his birth. On the record this was first written: 'Nish, Servia' (Nis, Yugoslavia, today), but this had been crossed out and 'Fillemon, Sonorra, Mexico' filled in. The reason would appear to be that Charlie, realizing after the original entry that this at that time (1915) would make him an enemy alien, had it changed. He did spend some years in Mexico, and he was reputed to have been with Pancho Villa on the border. Undoubtedly the first entry was the correct one.' In 1951, eight years before his death, Prentice Downes made one last ethnological and nostalgic trip north, this time by Jeep. At The Pas he met an old-timer, a canoe-builder named Bill Lyons, who had known Charlie well: 'He confirmed the story of Charlie driving the sleigh with a bull-moose and dog in tandem, his arrest and three months' imprisonment for poisoning wolves, and his walking back to Brochet with a hand sleigh. According to him, Charlie had a companion, Fred O'Brien, plus the two children on his famous Mississippi trip. He says the boy was a flyer, killed in the war. The proceeds from the children's dancing on the trip went into a fund for their education.' ◆

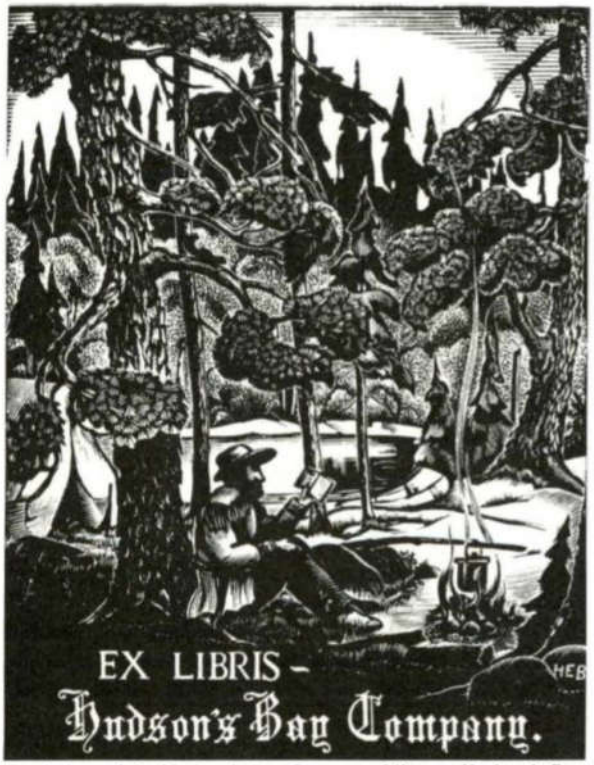
Alfred (left) and 'Eskimo Charlie' at Putahow.

*See Sigurd Olson's 'The Lonely Land' (1961), pp. 197-199.

Literacy, Literature and Libraries in the Fur Trade

By Michael Payne and Gregory Thomas

Fur traders were known for their skills in running rapids and hunting bears; many observers were surprised by their wide knowledge and the variety of books to be found even at isolated posts.



Bookplate of the Hudson's Bay Company Library, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg. From a wood engraving by H. Eric Bergman, c. 1930.

Michael Payne is currently completing his Ph.D. in Canadian History at Carleton University, Ottawa. He is also preparing a social history of York Factory for Parks Canada, Prairie Region.

Gregory Thomas, a historian with a special interest in Western Canada, is employed with Parks Canada in Winnipeg as the Interpretive Planner, Historic Parks and Sites, Prairie Region.

IN 1803 DANIEL WILLIAMS HARMON, writing from the North West Company's post at Fort Alexandria in the Swan River District, lamented the fact that he would be virtually alone for the summer. 'However fortunately for me I have *dead* Friends (my Books) who will never abandon me, till I first neglect them.'

Neither Harmon's use of metaphor nor his love of books accords well with the popular image of the fur trader. From R.M. Ballantyne on, fur traders are more likely to be depicted shooting rapids or hunting polar bears than reading books or composing poetry. While it is true the fur trade could be an exciting and adventurous life, for many company officers and employees it amounted to little more than a few years' work as a trader, clerk, boatman or tinsmith. It is not surprising then, given the solitude and routine of most fur traders' careers, that many sought relaxation, self-improvement and even romance in reading, or that some would write themselves.

Very little can be said about the specific reading habits of fur traders prior to the late eighteenth century. The various fur-trade concerns required at least a core of educated employees for record-keeping and other managerial functions, and it is probable that some men must have read something besides inventories.

For the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, references to reading as an aspect of fur-trade life are more frequent. It was during this period that the foundations of the various post libraries were apparently laid. These book collections at posts developed in several ways. The London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company periodically sent out books for use at the various factories as part of their long struggle 'to Promote Virtue and Discourage Vice'. In 1778 this meant that six books of Common Prayer, one Nautical Almanac, and a copy of Dr Dodd's *Sermons* were sent to Prince of Wales's Fort. Other books the Company sent out during this period tend to mirror the contents of the 1778 list. The books were usually religious or technical volumes, and give no indication that the London Committee sought to encourage recreational reading, however virtuous the subject.

It also seems fair to suggest that books entered these collections from the private libraries of fur traders who collected for themselves. Hudson's Bay Company officer

E. Brown Collection, Provincial Archives of Alberta

Fort Simpson, 1901. The Mackenzie District Library of over 2,000 volumes was housed here, in the building at far right, and books were sent out to Fort Resolution, Fort Good Hope and other outposts in the district.

Joseph Colen claimed a personal library of 1,400 volumes at York Factory in the 1790s, and men like David Thompson, Peter Fidler and Samuel Hearne also collected personal libraries. It is somewhat ironic that Colen's penchant for book collecting very nearly resulted in the loss of the manuscript of Andrew Graham's *Observations*. Colen apparently removed a manuscript copy of the *Observations* from the Company's London headquarters when he left England to return to York Factory. Only a specific request for its return in the General Letter of 1797 brought it back to London. Had it remained at York Factory it is unlikely that it would have survived.

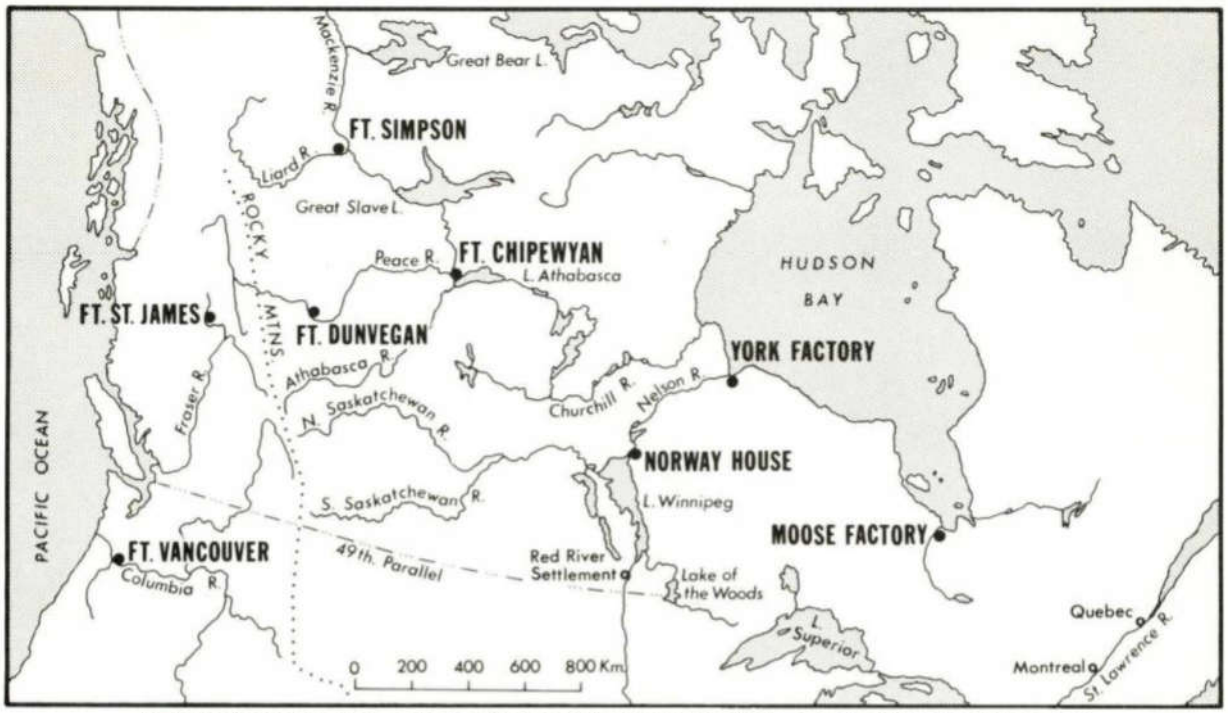
Archival records indicate that these bibliophiles ordered not just technical treatises but books ranging from Ann Radcliffe's 'Gothic' novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* to John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. These men took their reading seriously, even to the point of adopting the philosophical precepts of what they read. According to David Thompson, one Sunday after the regular religious service at Churchill, Samuel Hearne took his copy of Voltaire's Dictionary, and told Thompson and Mr Jefferson, the second in command at Churchill, that 'here is my belief, and I have no other.'

Many of the North West Company's posts also contained libraries of sorts. Forts Dunvegan, Alexandria, and Chipewyan are all mentioned by Daniel Harmon as repositories of books. Most of them, like the books at Hudson's Bay Company posts, were probably part of private collections originally, though some may have been sent out by the company itself. The collection at Fort Chipewyan, after the union of the two companies, seems to have formed the basis for the later Hudson's Bay Company library at that post, and was said to contain 'many sound books of history and general literature'. Harmon described one of these North West Company collections as being primarily 'moral and . . . religious Books', which suggests that North West Company libraries were not aimed at the recreational reader either.

No catalogues of these first libraries exist, but if the eighteenth-century materials in catalogues produced later reflect the original holdings of the fort libraries at Moose and York Factories, they included very little frivolous material. Only the odd work of poetry or comic play interrupts the list of works on astronomy, philosophy, language, medicine and other such serious subjects.

Judging by the surviving books themselves, and those archival references that have been discovered to date, it is hard to argue that prior to 1821 reading was anything else but an activity of a small élite, the chief factors and traders of the Hudson's Bay Company and the senior trading partners of the North West Company. These men, who appeared to read less for entertainment than for information, possessed the financial resources and, as important, access to means of transportation, which enabled them to assemble personal libraries. Many labourers and tradesmen, particularly the British 'servants' of the Hudson's Bay Company, were literate however. It is quite possible they carried about their own Bibles and reading material in their chests without the fact ever being noted in official correspondence, journals or inventories.

Indicative of the importance even Company servants



Hudson's Bay Company posts that had libraries in the nineteenth century. Several of these were subscription libraries which circulated books to other posts in their districts.

placed on the ability to read and write is Joseph Colen's comment in 1794 that many of the most promising men for positions as inland postmasters were 'ignorant of Letters' and thus were 'fearful to undertake it [command of a post] knowing that they would expose themselves to the ridicule of there [*sic*] fellow servants.' Indeed Colen mentioned the case of one Edward Wishart, the summer master at Sipawisk House, who was unable to write his own name and was 'obliged to apply to the men to read his Letters of Introduction', much to their satisfaction.

One should not forget that in this pre-1821 era fur traders themselves wrote on a wide variety of subjects. Fur-trade companies required extensive written records, and as the Hudson's Bay Company Archives attest, some traders produced a vast record of their observations and activities. Only a tiny portion of the writings of fur traders ever achieved publication at the time, but that should not blind us to the serious intent of much of what these early residents of the Northwest wrote. Fur traders of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies made important additions to the literature of travel and exploration; Alexander Mackenzie, Alexander Henry the Elder, and Samuel Hearne all produced outstanding examples of works in this genre that were published between 1795 and 1809. David Thompson, Henry Kelsey and Pierre Radisson kept journals that for one reason or another were not published until the twentieth century, but which clearly were intended for a larger audience when composed. Kelsey's work in particular is interesting because his travels and adventures were written at least in part in verse. Kelsey's reputation will always rest more firmly on his exploits as an explorer than on his career in letters, but it has been pointed out that he was probably the first writer of English verse in mainland Canada. Nor was his verse completely without poetic merit as the following description of a bear — presumably the grizzly — indicates.

> Another is an outgrown Bear wch, is good meat
> His skin to gett I have used all ye ways I can
> He is mans food & he makes food of man
> His hide they would not me it preserve
> But said it was a god & they should Starve

Some writers like Daniel Harmon distinguished themselves describing fur-trade manners and mores; others contributed to natural history, like Thomas Hutchins and Andrew Graham to whom Pennant's *Arctic Zoology* owes much. When one includes fur traders whose works have been published subsequently the list is even more impressive: Alexander Henry the Younger, James Isham, John Tanner and James Knight, to name a few. It is clear that the fur trader prior to 1821 was not simply an adventurer.

In the period following the union of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company the range of the reading and writing carried on in the Northwest expanded. It is also better documented. One of the most

important changes was the development of formal libraries aimed at providing residents of the Northwest with reading material, and which were subject to some sort of institutional control. These libraries were distinct from the older book collections at posts, some of which remained and some of which seem to have been incorporated into the new institutions. The earliest of these was probably the Red River Library for which plans were made as early as 1816. A list of its holdings reveals that by June 1822 it contained 74 titles comprising nearly 200 volumes — soon after augmented by the personal library of H B C trader and surveyor Peter Fidler, who left his collection of 500 volumes to the Red River Settlement when he died in December 1822. The holdings of the Red River Library reflected the agricultural rather than the fur-trade base of the settlement. Although little is known about its origins, it seems to have been an organized collection, created as a reference library for the settlement.

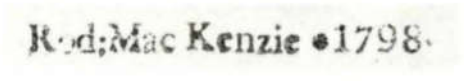
The earliest permanent lending or subscription library at a Company post appears to have been the library set up at Fort Vancouver for the Columbia District. There had been books of a practical nature at Fort Vancouver from 1825, most of which seem to have come from a small collection at the North West Company post, Fort George. Company employees who wanted less technical reading material than handbooks on gunnery or law, however, had to look elsewhere. Dr William Tolmie, who arrived at Fort McLoughlin in December 1833 to act as a surgeon and clerk, seems to have raised the idea of a subscription library for the district. The scheme was discussed with two fellow clerks, Donald Manson and Alexander Caulfield Anderson, and Anderson in turn 'ventilated' the matter when he next reported to the Columbia depot. It was 'readily taken up' by Chief Factor McLoughlin and other officers. The actual implementation of this new library scheme is not documented, but in later years Dr Tolmie recalled that by 1836 'a circulating library of papers, magazines, and some books' was operating 'full blast'.

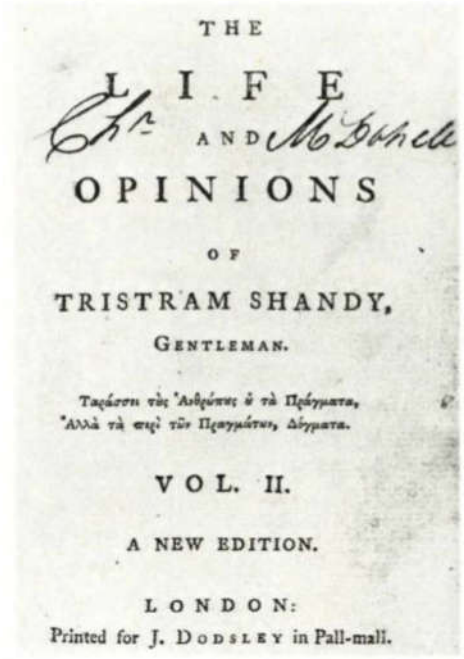
The collection was kept at a central location, Fort Vancouver. Subscribers met there annually, usually a week or so before the departure of the 'express canoe' on its 3,000-mile journey to York Factory. The indent for periodicals and books to be charged to the 'Columbia Library' was sent by ship from York Factory to London, where the Company's secretary placed the order with London book dealers. The following year the order was shipped back to Fort Vancouver and the 'Columbia Library' on the Company's annual supply vessel and then inland by the Company's well-established transportation network. Subscribers who were not resident at Fort Vancouver could send there for the material they wanted, returning it when convenient. This library appears to have operated into the mid-1850s, as the last reference to it in Company accounts appears in 1855.

Chris Grant, Parks Canada

Chris Grant, Parks Canada

Interior views of the restored Men's House and Big House (governor's residence) at Lower Fort Garry reflect the social divisions that existed between H B C servants and officers. Prior to c. 1821 reading was mainly the activity of the officers of the fur-trade companies. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, due to factors such as the establishment of formal post libraries, reading materials were more accessible to fur-trade employees of most ranks.




THE

LIFE

AND

OPINIONS

OF

TRISTRAM SHANDY,

GENTLEMAN.

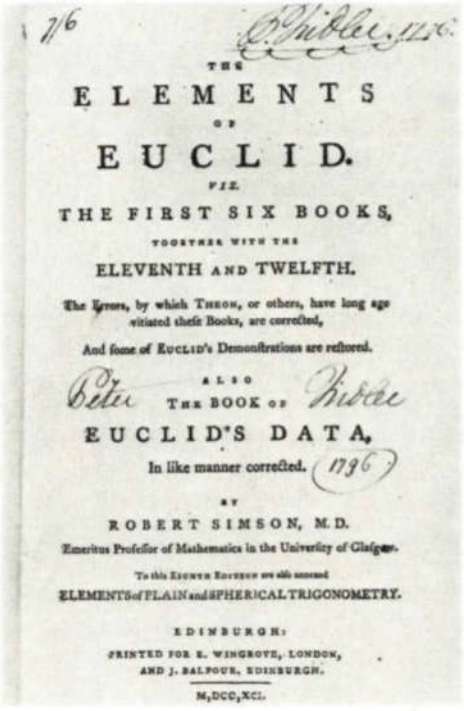
Ταράσσει τὸὺς Ἀνθρώπους ὐ τὰ Πράγματα,
Ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν Πραγμάτων, Δόγματα.

VOL. II.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for J. DODSLEY in Pall-mall.

Books from the personal libraries of Peter Fidler of the H B C, and Roderick McKenzie of the North West Company who established Fort Chipewyan, and its library.


THE

ELEMENTS

OF

EUCLID.

VIZ.

THE FIRST SIX BOOKS,

TOGETHER WITH THE

ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH.

The Errors, by which THEON, or others, have long ago vitiated these Books, are corrected,

And some of EUCLID's Demonstrations are restored.

ALSO

THE BOOK OF

EUCLID'S DATA,

In like manner corrected. (1796)

BY

ROBERT SIMSON, M.D.

Emeritus Professor of Mathematics in the University of Glasgow.

To this EIGHTH EDITION are also annexed

ELEMENTS of PLAIN and SPHERICAL TRIGONOMETRY.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR S. WINGROVE, LONDON,
AND J. BALFOUR, EDINBURGH.

M,DCC,XCI.

By that time the idea of a subscription library, established at a central location, with materials circulating over an entire district to members, had taken hold. Such a library was established in the vast Mackenzie River District in the 1840s, and at York and Moose Factories in the 1850s. The Mackenzie District Library was housed at Fort Simpson. In 1849, Irish-born Company clerk Bernard Rogan Ross, a man of distinctly literary tastes, wrote to his friend William Lane, a clerk at Lower Fort Garry, describing a library at Fort Simpson that contained novels, poetry, history, biography and periodicals. Those who wished to join the library, for which Ross was librarian and treasurer, had to pay an entrance fee of £1 and an annual subscription fee of £1 — rates which suggest that membership was still restricted to officers or the more affluent clerks. In return, books — 'not stale old books but sterling English Editions of authors in good repute' — were circulated to Fort Resolution, Fort Good Hope and other outposts of this, the most solitary and isolated of the fur-trade districts.

In the summer of 1852 David Anderson, the first Bishop of Rupert's Land, noted that a library had recently been established at Moose Factory, though his suggestion that Moose Factory and York could profit by emulating the practice of the Fort Simpson Library, indicates that the library at Moose was intended solely for the use of residents of that post. Anderson discussed the value of libraries like those at Fort Vancouver and Fort Simpson in the following terms:

> If libraries of some extent could be established at some central posts, and the books circulated through the surrounding district, the good effect produced might be very great. It might be the means of self-improvement to young men cut off from all the advantages of society, and beguile the solitude of these retired posts.

Certainly, for the Church Missionary Society of the Church of England and the other religious denominations present in the Northwest after 1821, the development of libraries at Company posts was very much in keeping with their religious and educational mission.

A subscription library called the 'Moose Book Club' was created in due time and operated until unspecified problems caused it to be reorganized as the James Bay Library in September 1873. Minutes of the initial meeting of the new library suggest it absorbed the holdings of the old Moose Factory library since members of the original library retained borrowing privileges with the new improved subscription library. The yearly fee was ten shillings for residents of Moose Factory and eight shillings for others. Books were loaned to other posts for no more than one year, and to residents of Moose Factory for one month. Books not returned at the specified time would simply be charged to the borrower's account.

A similar library was established at Norway House in 1870, but the largest and most successful of these subscription libraries appears to have been the library at York Factory.

Given Bishop Anderson's support for libraries at fur-trade posts it is no surprise that a leading role in the establishment of the library was taken by the Reverend William Mason, the missionary at York, and that the collection at least initially contained a great deal of religious material. The initial meeting to establish the library was held on 18 February 1856 and Mason noted in his journal that 'A sufficient sum to purchase 200 vols was at once subscribed and Laws & regulations were made - Mr. Clare - Dr. Beddome - Mr. Anderson, Mr. Watson and myself were present. Mr. Mactavish gave it his approval and promised to subscribe.' The list of interested parties included most of the officers stationed at York Factory, and subsequent journal entries detailing donations and help given to the new enterprise underline the impression that initially the York Factory Library served the interests of the post's élite. Chief Factor James Hargrave, the senior Company officer, 'gave important advice respecting its management', and then a donation of 5 guineas.

From the start, however, William Mason anticipated that the library would be a great addition to life at York Factory, and that it would serve the larger post community. As his journal entry for 18 February 1856 states:

> This will be a great blessing to the Establishment when carried out upon sound principles and I sincerely hope it will succeed and prosper — The present inmates are much given to reading & I only wish I had my books which were left in Red River Settlement to lend to them.

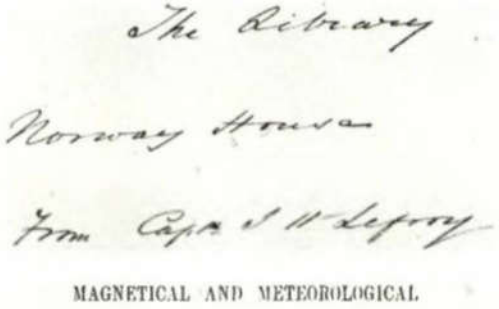
The library commenced operations on 1 November 1856 when 'the York Factory Library was formally opened for the benefit of all classes'. The library had '133 volumes to commence with', in addition to the publications of the Religious Tract Society 'which are not only very interesting but calculated to do good'. Mason was particularly pleased to note that 'many of the servants enter their names as annual subscribers of 5s1- and some 10s-. May it be a means of creating a thirst for the knowledge of eternal things.'

Mason's hopes that the library would have a beneficial impact on the religious and moral life of York Factory do not appear to have been entirely realized, but the library proved to be a great success and it retained a high degree of popularity amongst the Company servants at York Factory and environs. George Simpson McTavish, in his autobiography *Behind the Palisades,* gives a lengthy description of the library, its operations and importance to life at York Factory in 1889.

H B C Archives

Part of the old library in the Men's House at Norway House, photographed in 1927. Established in 1870, it included among its subscribers Donald A. Smith, Robert Campbell, W.J. Christie and Richard Hardisty.

Copy of J. H. Lefroy's 'Observations' presented to the Norway House Library by the author.


The Library
Norway House
From Capt J H Lefroy

MAGNETICAL AND METEOROLOGICAL

OBSERVATIONS

AT

LAKE ATHABASCA AND FORT SIMPSON,

By CAPTAIN J. H. LEFROY,

ROYAL ARTILLERY;

AND AT

FORT CONFIDENCE,

IN GREAT BEAR LAKE.

By SIR JOHN RICHARDSON, C.B., M.D.

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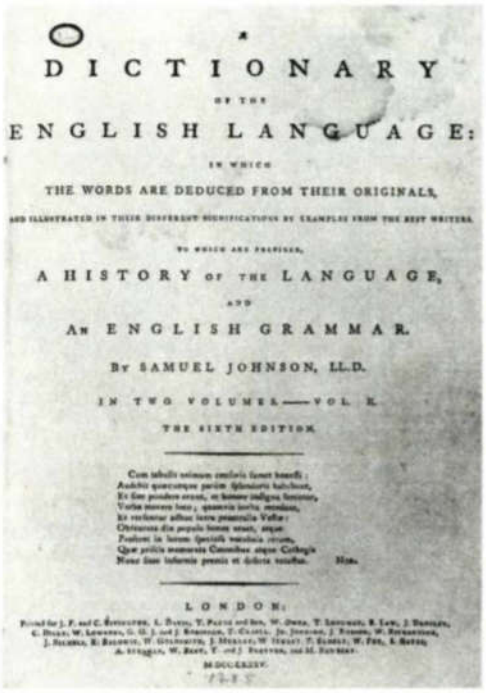
1855.

Moosefactory Book Club



A
DICTIONARY
OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE:
IN WHICH
THE WORDS ARE DEDUCED FROM THEIR ORIGINALS,
AND ILLUSTRATED IN THEIR DIFFERENT SIGNIFICATIONS BY EXAMPLES FROM THE BEST WRITERS.
TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,
A HISTORY OF THE LANGUAGE,
AND
AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR.
By SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.
THE SIXTH EDITION.
LONDON:
MDCCXCIV.

Second volume of Samuel Johnson's 'Dictionary', from the Moose Factory Book Club which was reorganized as the James Bay Library in 1873.

York Factory was fortunate in having a goodly collection of books, amounting to nineteen hundred volumes when I left in 1889. . . . The duty of librarian fell to the apprentice clerk for more reasons than one, the chief however being, that the ten shillings fee, otherwise to be paid from his first year's salary of twenty pounds, was allowed for his services, and meant much to him. The higher officers paid one pound, the clerks ten shillings and the mechanics and labourers five shillings annually, the same rate applying if I remember aught, to post managers and men in the district and adjoining ones. The books covered many fields of knowledge, selection being made from catalogues received from London by the ship, at an annual meeting, held prior to the departure of the Winter packet which carried the next year's order to England via Winnipeg. The men had a representative, but dependence was placed almost entirely on the officers, who tried to get the best, and most for the available funds.

Each year the collection of popular magazines and periodicals like *Punch* and *Chambers's Journal* was added to, and series of standard nineteenth century writers brought up to date. In addition 'tales of adventure' were purchased for the men, although 'No trash' was allowed. 'We could not afford to get worthless books.'

McTavish also noted in his memoirs that the York Factory Library provided the material not only for many social evenings but for the York Factory 'Literary Society', a social gathering where the men contributed readings, songs, recitations and even chemistry exhibits.

The library was open on Saturday nights, officially for one hour after the ringing of the post bell, but usually 'till everybody had pored around the shelves and made his week's selection'. A candle provided the only light, and as there was no fire in the library even in winter, the librarian's job could be a cold one. McTavish mentions that one evening he put the end of his pencil in his mouth 'and the graphite or lead adhered to my tongue'.

When McTavish took charge of the library it was in some disarray, as previous librarians had neglected to keep good records of its holdings or the locations of books that had been loaned to subscribers at the outposts. McTavish spent two winters taking inventory and compiling a new catalogue of the library with beneficial results for both the collection and himself:

> The overhauling and systematizing process gave me an acquaintance with the volumes under my charge, though I did not become much of a reader, till I felt the want of companionship later when located at an outpost myself. . . .That library was my best friend, and in later years I reaped the reward of my exertions, and became indebted to the founders for many happy hours.

Surviving catalogues of the fur-trade libraries suggest that McTavish's description of the books purchased for the York Factory Library is quite representative of the kinds of material to be found in the post libraries of this period. These libraries contained some reference works such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*; large quantities of history — British, military and ancient for the most part; and some works of travel, exploration, and biography. Shakespeare's works were well represented, and poets like Byron, Burns, Longfellow, and Tennyson could be found. They also contained a fair amount of religious matter, tracts and biographies especially, but in rather smaller quantities than William Mason had hoped. The bulk of the collections were novels, and their authors read like a who's who of nineteenth-century British letters: Scott, Dickens, Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton, Thackeray, Trollope, Stevenson, with only the occasional title such as *Thirty Years in the Harem* by Kibizli as a change of pace. It seems the tastes of fur-trade readers differed little from those of the British public.

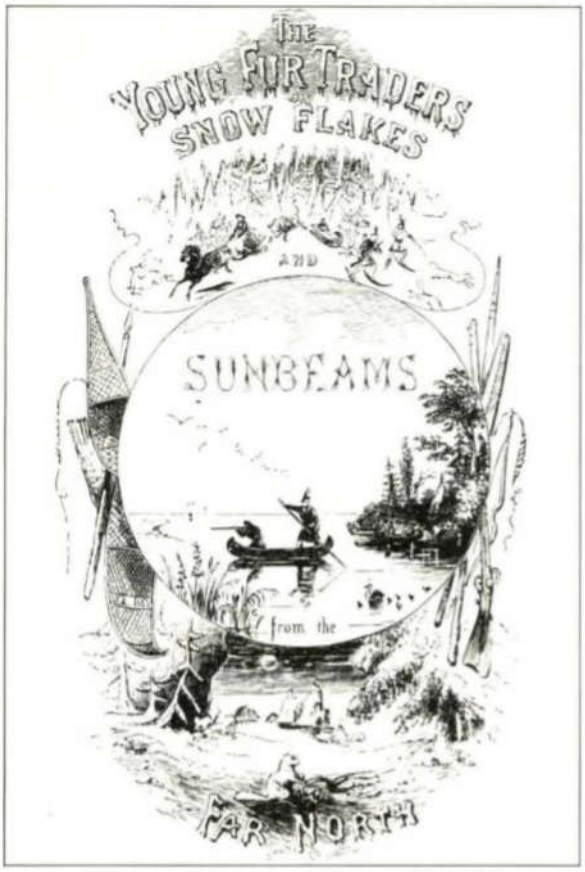
What is most interesting about these collections is the scarcity of books by fur traders and about the Northwest.

A. V. Thomas Collection, Manitoba Archives

Reverend R. Faries reading in the library at York Factory in 1910. The York Factory Library was one of the largest and most successful of the subscription libraries at fur-trade posts.

H B C Collection

York Factory, c. 1889. The library was located in the building to the right of the bell tower. Although the building was unheated, even in winter, G.S. McTavish noted that 'the preservation and condition of the books were marvellous, considering the varieties of temperature they were subjected to during the year.'



Title page of an autographed copy of R.M. Ballantyne's 'The Young Fur Traders', from the library at York Factory.

Unlike the library at headquarters in London which contained virtually everything written about the natural history, exploration and life of the Northwest, post libraries contained little of this sort of material. Fur traders certainly read and commented on books written by or about themselves, James Isham having begun this tradition in 1748 with his critique of Henry Ellis, but such books must have been more common in personal libraries. The growth of subscription and circulating libraries in the fur-trade territory by no means put an end to private book collecting.

The nineteenth-century fur trader probably had an easier time as a book collector than his eighteenth-century counterpart. The Company did not encourage its employees to build personal collections, but it did not deny them that privilege either. Its attitude seems to have been similar to its view of the subscription libraries for which it waived transport costs on purchases. The Company could have made private book purchases all but prohibitive in expense, but it did not, and many ordered their books through the Secretary of the London Committee.

Private libraries could be assembled in a number of ways. One option for those who had the means and access to a collection was simply to purchase it outright. William Lane acquired his collection this way while at Norway House in 1847. Others interested in buying or selling books used the clerks or other officials at a major post to act as agents for them. James Hargrave, at York Factory, frequently sold or acquired books for his friends scattered throughout the interior. Hargrave, perhaps because he was such an avid reader himself, was also willing to act as conduit for book orders to be placed with the Company secretary in London. One interesting example of books acquired in this manner is the order placed for William Drever, a carpenter at York Factory in 1834. Drever requested

1 Copy Housepainter & Colourman's Guide)By P.F.
1 Do The Varnishers Guide) Fingay
1 Do The Cabinet Makers Do By G.A. Siddons
1 Do The Builders Practical Do)By John Nicholson
1 Do The Millwrights Do)Esq. Civil Engineer
1 Do The Young Mans Book of Knowledge
1 Do The Cottagers of Glenburniel
1 Do The Cottagers on the Cliff
1 Do The Sequel to Ditto

This book order is one of the very few specific references to the reading selections of anyone other than an officer of a fur-trade company, and offers a rare glimpse of the reading tastes of the Men's House. It is doubtful that Drever's book choices were typical of most Company servants — they probably indicate a greater degree of ambition and desire for improvement of technical skills than was usual — but his choice of non-technical books is revealing. The 'cottager' novels would appear to be about the plight of Scottish crofters during the Highland Clearances, and any book about Scotland or Gaelic culture was bound to find eager readers amongst the fur traders. Sir Walter Scott's novels were particular favourites, and even a practical fur trader like Chief Factor Donald Ross could adopt a partisan position in the ongoing debate over whether or not the Gaelic poems of Ossian were in fact the creation of the Scottish poet James Macpherson.

However acquired, these private libraries were common, and indicate how important it was to fur-trade employees to be literate, informed and up-to-date. Many observers were surprised by the knowledge exhibited by fur traders, and by the sorts of reading matter one could find even in isolated posts. For example, the soldier-surveyor John Henry Lefroy was astonished to find a copy of the architect John Claudius Loudon's *Cyclopedia of Villa and Farm Architecture* at Fort Simpson in 1844, only a year after it was published. J. P. Gardiner, the Anglican missionary at York Factory, in 1861 stated that the men there were 'willing to talk on any subject — science, politics — anything rather than practical Christianity'. Notwithstanding Gardiner's chagrin at

their lack of interest in Christianity, it is clear fur traders of most ranks, by the mid-nineteenth century were exposed to much of what was being published during the period, and despite their apparent isolation they were far from ignorant of the ideas and news of the outside world.

Given this, it is not surprising that many turned their own hands to literary pursuits. After 1821, fur traders made fewer contributions to the literature of travel and exploration — for the most part exploration was carried out by Royal Navy expeditions, and travellers tended to be scientists like Lefroy or clerics like Bishop Anderson. Many fur traders, however, made significant scientific contributions; the as yet largely untold story of the relationship between fur-trade correspondents and the Smithsonian Institution and British Museum is one illustration. The nineteenth-century fur trade also produced at least one major literary figure and a few eager amateurs.

R. M. Ballantyne managed to build an undistinguished career in the fur trade at York Factory, Fort Garry, and Tadoussac into a distinguished one as a writer of boys' adventure novels. His contribution to work at York Factory was not rated highly. William Mactavish wrote with regard to his skills as a clerk: 'I think myself it would have been a better joke, since they are determined to have a force, to have sent out, either Mr. McKenzie's or Mr. Finlayson's coat and trowsers stuffed with straw.' Nor were his books about the fur trade always well viewed by those he wrote about; James Anderson suggested that 'His Everyday life in Hudsons Bay was easy enough — I wish he had seen some of my everyday life for many Years. . .' Nevertheless Ballantyne wrote several books, including, *Ungava, The Young Fur Traders,* and *Hudson's Bay,* based rather loosely on his experiences in the fur trade. His fur-trade associates may have doubted the veracity of some of his stories, but his adoring public of Victorian school boys did not. His imperialist thinking and tendency to moralize make his books heavy going for the modern reader, but even so, he retains his reputation as one of the best and most prolific of the writers of the 'boys' own adventure' book.

Far less successful but no less interesting in certain respects are the oddities of fur-trade writing. Two examples of less successful fur-trade authors than R. M. Ballantyne may be used to stand for many. Bernard Rogan Ross, who was to have a distinguished career as a naturalist and as a Company employee, had less success as a writer. In his youth at Fort Simpson, he produced a newspaper entitled *The Athabasca Journal and English River Inquirer.* He had quite correctly noted the desire his fellow fur traders had for news, but it appears his idea of a newspaper containing news in a light vein for the diversion of those journeying about the interior, was not a great success. He also fancied himself as a poet, and John Henry Lefroy, himself an indifferent poet, mentions that Ross 'inflicted upon me a quire of his own compositions, begging to know which I liked best. You never saw such stuff.' Lefroy's brief but caustic assessment of Ross's poetic skills might apply equally to those of Dr William Smellie, the post surgeon at York Factory from 1845 to 1849. Dr Smellie produced a volume of poetry entitled *The Sea; Sketches of a Voyage to Hudson's Bay; and Other Poems* in 1855 under the unlikely nom de plume of 'The Scald'. By his own admission the poems had 'neither the charm of romantic narrative, nor the zest of humourous description, to recommend them to the general reader.' His modesty in this regard is probably the best thing about the book of poetry. His lengthy 'Sketches of a Voyage to Hudson's Bay' suggests that the muse of poetry did not embark with him, but even this dreadful poetry attests to the desire of at least some fur traders to express themselves in a literary manner.

H B C Collection

Bernard Rogan Ross, a chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company and a distinguished naturalist, was at one time librarian and treasurer of the library at Fort Simpson.

The reading of books and the writing of books was always a part of life in the fur trade for those with literary inclinations, and if perhaps it was not as universal an experience of fur-trade life as running a set of rapids or shooting a bear or any of our other more romantic notions about life in the Northwest, that should not blind us to its importance to the fur traders themselves. ◆

Don Cardinal – Bush Painter of the North

By Lanny Cooke

Lanny Cooke of Yellowknife writes film and radio scripts for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and does a monthly column in 'Native Press.'

Paintings, unless otherwise credited, are from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre Collection, Department of Justice and Public Services, Yellowknife. Photographs by Alan Booth.

A WHITE PATH LEADS through the grey willows, grey-green spruce trees, and spindly birch. Around the bend from a woodpile that gleams golden in the spring sun is Don Cardinal's small home.

'I like to live the life that I paint,' Don has said many times, so he built his house last Christmas and moved his wife and two children into the bush close to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Outside his door are the dogs; one white sled dog jumps and yips a friendly welcome to visitors. In front of the large plastic-covered, east-facing window he is bent over his easel.

'I'm right down to basics now,' Don says. Inside his home there is no electricity or running water. He has his own dog-team, he draws water from the lake, cuts his own wood, and this is the way he hopes to stay.

His paintings depict life in the bush: dog-teams struggling across a windswept frozen lake; the abandoned cabins of prospectors; the buildings and the people of small bush communities; and wolves, a favourite Cardinal subject.

Don Cardinal started to draw at an early age in the Roman Catholic mission in northern Alberta where he was raised and where he lived until he was fifteen. His first pictures were of the mission buildings. When he moved to Lesser Slave Lake, where he lived for two years with an uncle, he sketched scenes of cutting wood, hunting and handling horses. In 1964 he moved to Hay River, N.W.T., and spent his days pulling fish nets out from beneath the ice of Great Slave Lake. There he drew dog-teams and fishermen. He remembers the evenings. 'I would be by myself in a log cabin while my partner hauled the fish across the ice by dog-team. So I did a little drawing. It was something that came over me. I just had to do it.'

He began to experiment with colour and at first he outlined all his colours with hard lines. In 1967 he had his first formal instruction in a commercial art course at Brandon, Manitoba. There he learned more about colour, the materials to use, perspective, and consistency.

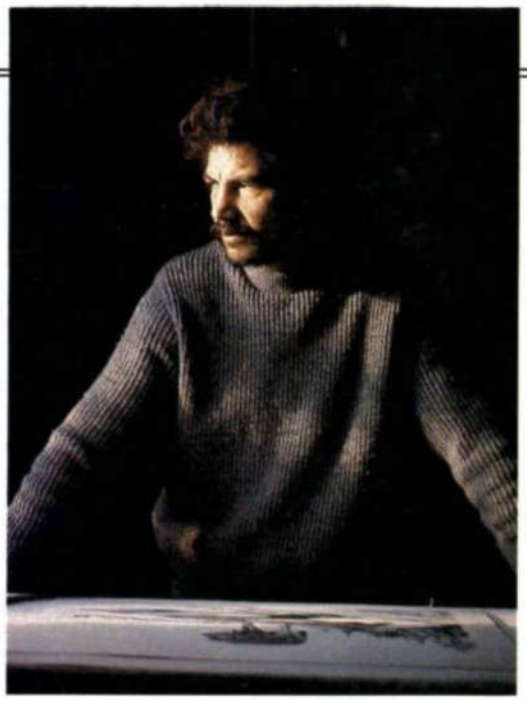
He strives to keep his paintings of the same quality. He will destroy a canvas and start afresh if he is having problems with it. 'I don't like to struggle with a painting,' he says. 'It has to come out freely.'

From 1968 to 1975 Cardinal spent a lot of time in the Old Village of Hay River, now no longer in existence. 'I walked around and talked to the people in the village. Once they knew what I was doing, that I was getting ideas for paintings, they were friendly. They understood that I wanted to paint the life-style of the people as it is today.'

As the artist talked, the sun shifted to the west – facing window above the Coleman stove and Don moved his easel. 'I follow the sun all day long,' he smiled. He talked of how his style is always changing. 'I grow with it. It changes little by little. Now that I am selling more work I have started doing larger canvasses. I'm painting with more freedom, working more with texture.'

Tomorrow he will harness his dogs and head out on Great Slave Lake. At an ice-fishing camp twenty miles away he will help take in nets and clean fish. Then, when the night falls and the fishermen are huddled around the woodstove, Cardinal will pull out his sketching pad and begin to draw.

Cardinal paintings have been exhibited at the Canadiana Galleries in Edmonton where he worked as a resident painter for a year. Successful one-man shows have been held at St John's Ravenscourt School in Winnipeg, Herbert Schwarz Gallery in Calgary, and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife.



Don Cardinal, 39, in his home in the bush near Yellowknife.

Campbell & Chipman, Winnipeg

'Coming from the Smokehouse', 30" x 22". Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Sidebottom Galleries, Winnipeg.

'Dog Team', 30" x 22". Acrylic on canvas.

'Drummers', 24" x 14". Acrylic on canvas.

The artist at his sketch board.

'Berry Pickers', 30" x 22". Acrylic on canvas.

HISTORY IN THEIR BLOOD

The Indian Portraits of Nicholas de Grandmaison

Text by Hugh A. Dempsey; introduction by J. Russell Harper. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver/Toronto, 1982. 124 pp., illus. $40.00.

Reviewed by John C. Ewers

For a century and a half — since the days of George Catlin and Karl Bodmer — members of the Indian tribes of the Northern Great Plains have been favourite subjects for white artists who travelled west to paint Indians. Many of those Indians possessed that combination of rugged features — high cheekbones; strong, firm jaw; and prominent nose — and dignified mien, that artists regarded as important characteristics of ideal Indians.

One of the very talented artists who sought to portray Indians on the Canadian Plains was Nicholas de Grandmaison (1892-1978), who is still little known in the United States, and is not as well known in Canada as he should be. This beautiful book should help to remedy that situation.

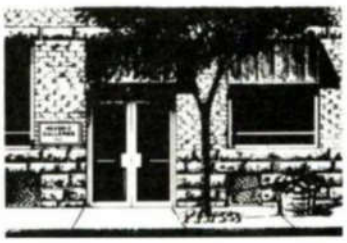
In his introduction J. Russell Harper, noted authority on Canadian art history, calls attention to this artist's romantic search for a modern counterpart of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 'Noble Savage', which he found in those putative full-blood Indians of the Plains whom he selected for his models and whose likenesses he rendered 'with a deliberate and telling force which imparts life into every line of his documentary record of the faces of a people'.

In his text Hugh Dempsey briefly traces the major events in this artist's life, and informs us of his eccentricities. Born in Russia into a family of noble descent, Nicholas de Grandmaison emigrated to England after the Bolshevik Revolution. After schooling in art in London, he moved to the prairie provinces of Canada in 1923, where he remained until his death in 1978. It was the physical appearance of the putative full-blood Indians that attracted this portraitist to them. Some of his favourite subjects he portrayed over and over again. Yet his interests in Indians seemed to end with their physical appearances. He portrayed them from the neck up, and paid little attention to their costume or ornaments. He did not even record the names of some of his Indian sitters. When Dempsey sought to provide brief accounts of the interests and achievements of his sitters, he had to take photographs of a number of portraits into the field to obtain the names of these sitters from men and women who could identify the individuals portrayed.

A most important and unique feature of this book is the reproduction in colour of the artist's own cherished collection of his favourite Indian portraits executed over a thirty-year period (1930-1960). He exhibited some of these works, but refused to part with them during his lifetime. After his death his heirs sold them to their present owner, the Bank of Montreal. We must conclude that these were the Indian portraits by which the artist wished to be remembered. These 64 portraits provide an adequate basis for future evaluations of Nicholas de Grandmaison's contribution to the artists' record of the Indians of the Northern Plains.

Doubtless, Nicholas de Grandmaison's works will be compared most frequently with those of a contemporary, who was also of European birth and artistic training, and who came to portray Indians of some of the same tribes he did. German-born Winold Reiss (1888-1953) executed numerous pastel portraits from life of many men, women, and children of the Blackfoot tribes of Montana and Alberta. They admired him, named him Beaver Child because of his intense artistic activity over extended periods, and permitted his ashes to be scattered over their Montana reservation after his death. I must

AGASSIZ GALLERIES



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confess a certain partiality for Reiss's works (probably because he included carefully detailed renderings of the costume of his sitters in many of his portraits). During the 1940s I came to know some Indians whom both Grandmaison and Reiss portrayed. It is my opinion that, although they employed quite different styles, both of these fine artists produced excellent likenesses of their Indian sitters.

Dr Ewers, Ethnologist Emeritus, Smithsonian Institution, is author of a number of books on the Indian people and the artists who portrayed them in the Old West.

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A FLANNEL SHIRT & LIBERTY

British Emigrant Gentlewomen in the Canadian West, 1880-1914

Edited by Susan Jackel. University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1982. 229 pp., illus. $24.95.

Reviewed by Wendy Mitchinson

Canadian historians have written a great deal about the Western immigrant experience but have tended to ignore that of the largest immigrant group, the British. In *A Flannel Shirt and Liberty,* Susan Jackel tries to rectify the situation by republishing excerpts from ten different authors whose writings focus on the emigrant British gentlewomen. Those familiar with Canadian women's history will recognize some old friends among the writers: Marion Cran, Georgina Binnie-Clark, Ella Sykes and Emily Weaver to name only a few.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Britons became aware that their country had a surplus of women of all classes. Of particular concern were middle-class women who, because of their background, had no employment training and for whom jobs did not exist which would allow them to maintain their social standing. Canada, on the other hand, had a surplus of men. It did not take too much ingenuity to believe that sending the surplus women of Britain to Canada would solve both nations' difficulties and indeed this is what the two respective governments and various independent agencies attempted to encourage and to do. The documents in *A Flannel Shirt and Liberty* were all written with the plight of these middle-class women in mind and they reflect a good cross-section of opinion. Some of the authors had lived in the West whereas others had simply come as observers for a short time. Many fervently believed that the western experience was a happy one and well suited to middle-class women while a good number were equally convinced it was much too harsh. From all the narratives, however, emerge two themes — the physical experience of settling a new country and the contributions made by those women who survived it.

Certainly to survive the pioneering process necessitated that the women be young, healthy, adaptable and above all willing to work, for all the documents stress the sheer physical labour which was involved in running a home on the prairies. The separation of the sexes may have been strong during these years but it obviously was not immutable since most women did outdoor work in addition to their domestic chores. The women who came gained in material wealth and more often than not had the satisfaction of knowing that in Western Canada their children would have a future. But Canada benefited as well, not only in economic terms which is what historians are wont to emphasize, but in cultural terms. Although Jackel cannot develop the theme, she does suggest in an excellent introductory essay that the number of middle-class women coming to the West altered the class composition of that part of Canada and affected its cultural matrix. These women were concerned about feeding their families both physically and mentally. They had a strong sense of what they could offer and felt only pity for men without women. They believed their duty was to open up the Empire alongside the British male and revelled that they could do it in such a free environment where class differences based on petty appearances were given less significance than at home. These women brought an activism with them which changed its focus over time. In the 1880s it was an energy centred on family but by the turn of the century they were also emphasizing that the West offered opportunities for the single woman to become not just a home help but an independent entrepreneur. No longer was the ambition of a woman to help a man start a farm but to perhaps own one herself. And while they acknowledged the difficulties facing life in the West they were less willing than their predecessors to accept without protest needless hardships. These women participated in the pioneer experience and agitated for their own rights as individuals at the same time and their calls for equality had an appeal that could not be denied, given the sacrifices they had made.

A Flannel Shirt and Liberty: British Emigrant Gentlewomen in

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the Canadian West, 1880-1914 is a book about women who lived the experience of pioneering and those who observed it. No consensus emerges about whether the life was suitable or not for the middle-class woman — so much depended on the individual and her outlook. Nevertheless, all the authors agreed that success was there for anyone of any class who wanted it and was willing to work for it.

Associate Professor Wendy Mitchinson, of the department of history, University of Windsor, is co-editor, with Ramsay Cook, of 'The Proper Sphere: Woman's Place in Canadian Society'.

WINNIPEG:
WHERE THE NEW WEST BEGINS
An Illustrated History

By Eric Wells; special material contributed by Edith Paterson. Sponsored by the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce. Windsor Publications, Burlington, Ont., 1982. 288 pp., illus. $29.95.

Reviewed by Alan F.J. Artibise

This attractive volume is an eclectic and enjoyable publication. The author, a well-known Winnipeg journalist and broadcaster, has utilized his journalistic skills and his access — as director of historical research — to the Western Canada Pictorial Index (located at the University of Winnipeg) to gather together a wide variety of 'side trips into Winnipeg's past', highlighted by several hundred illustrations. Wells was assisted in the project by long-time *Free Press* reporter, Edith Paterson. Their combined talents have resulted in a handsome and entertaining book that has something for virtually all conceivable readers. It must be noted, however, that this book is in no sense a thorough urban history; it lacks thematic continuity, rigorous organization, and the critical judgement of the professional historian. But this is not a volume that should be judged

by the normal standards of scholarly writing. While it occasionally will be of use to the urban historian as a source of data and insight, the book is most appropriately approached as a volume that readers will turn to as a pleasant form of entertainment.

Winnipeg: Where the New West Begins is organized into four distinct sections. Part One, 'Gateway to the West', contains nine short chapters that chronicle the 'elusive early heritage' of Manitoba, taking the reader from the discovery of Manitoba in the early 1600s through to 'Louis Riel's fiery challenge to the new Dominion's authority imposed upon Manitobans'. The Hudson's Bay Company is given a prominent role in this part of the volume.

The heart of *Winnipeg* is Part Two, entitled 'The City'. Twelve chapters in this section deal with such varied topics as 'Portage and Main', 'Churches Along the Red', 'Winnipeg Heroes', 'Depression and Drought', 'Port on the Prairie', and — as one has come to expect in any account of Winnipeg — 'General Strike', and 'The Other Side of the Tracks'. Section Two also includes a chapter of thirty-one colour plates that depict the city in various eras and seasons through paintings and contemporary photographs.

Part Three of the volume reveals the Chamber of Commerce support received for this project; it contains almost fifty brief histories of companies and organizations who supported publication. The final section of the volume is devoted to a detailed Manitoba and Winnipeg chronology.

Winnipeg is a book that delivers value, if value is measured in terms of lavish production, quality illustrations and charmingly informative prose. Serious students of Manitoba and Winnipeg, however, should turn elsewhere for stimulation and critical analysis.

Alan F. J. Artibise is professor of history at the University of Victoria and the author of several books and numerous articles on Winnipeg.

GLASS IN CANADA
The First One Hundred Years

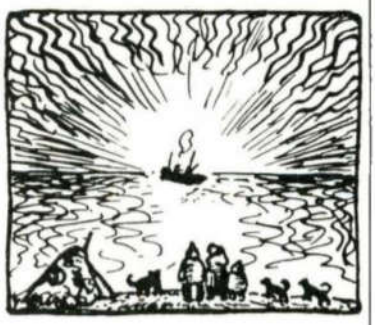
By Gerald Stevens; foreword by Ralph Hedlin and Heidi Redekop. Methuen Publications, Toronto, 1982. 282 pp., illus. $39.95.

Reviewed by Philip Shackleton

This book is presented as the posthumously published work of Gerald Stevens, the first modern-day student and researcher of the history of glass manufacturing in Canada. The reader can scarcely avoid, however, an eerie suspicion that Stevens may have done some of the writing posthumously, a factor that would make it easier to understand the producers' presentation of information concerning certain categories of old glass objects. These are based clearly on revelation from a higher plane, a concept that would tickle the late Mr Stevens.

The unfortunate truth is that the handsomely produced book is far from what its cover and title page suggest. It is not a definitive history or review of satisfactorily proven data concerning a century of glass making in Canada. Rather it is a catalogue of glass pieces left by Mr and Mrs Stevens, a publication which the present owners of the collection, Heidi Redekop and Ralph Hedlin, have completed as a testimony of faith in their mentor.

'There are lots of things I believe that I can't prove'. Stevens's words, taken from the text, will provide for the demanding student a key to the entire book. According to him, or his ghost writer, it is essential for the student to 'authenticate' the pieces he acquires. A couple of anecdotes concerning the acquisition of a few pieces provide better than circumstantial evidence as to their origin. But hundreds of pieces illustrated and labelled according to the factories where they were made are actually authenticated, at least within this text, only by Stevens's word.



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Some identification has been established evidently by comparing very small shards excavated from old factory sites with complete glass objects from any source whatsoever. This technique applied to the earlier glass industry is particularly subject to secondary questioning because every furnace batch contained an appreciable quantity of re-cycled broken glass. This *cullet* often came from outside the factory and its surviving shards can lead the modern archaeologist astray.

The text reminds readers that glass workers were often migrants, that some craftsmen in Canadian houses had come from the United States and that some brought existing glass molds. Despite this, Stevens and his disciples went on to apply different 'Canadian' names to pressed-glass patterns they determined had been made in Canadian factories, even though the same patterns had been made earlier in the United States and also identified and named earlier by glass students. The result in the collectors' marketplace can only be confusion and the opportunity for misrepresentation when profit is at stake.

This presentation of the surviving Stevens collection betrays some lack of balance. It is essential to remember that important pieces acquired by Stevens in earlier years have for a long time been part of the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum. Despite the grandiose title, it has not been the job of this book to deal with that material or with that in any other collection.

A certain amount of conjecture is not out of place in the first reports of researchers in any hitherto unexplored field of study. But it is twenty-five years and more since the first collectors' articles on Canadian glass appeared in print. The only publication that can be justified now is one offering facts and figures: what researchers call documentation. This one offers only faith and hope.

Philip Shackleton, author of 'The Furniture of Old Ontario', has dealt in Canadian antiques for many years.

INUIT
The North in Transition

By Ulli Steltzer. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver/Toronto, 1982. 216 pp., illus. $29.95.

Reviewed by Graham Rowley

The title of this book implies a fairly comprehensive account of the Inuit at the present time, and the Preface promises 'an attempt to give a realistic picture in photographs and the people's own words, of Inuit today, not in theoretical or political terms, but in concrete, human terms — a picture of their daily lives, their pleasures and problems, their feelings about themselves and their environment.'

It would have been more accurate to describe *Inuit* as an album of photographs, because it is not a properly composed picture, in the same way that a series of random incidents does not produce a story. In particular the pleasures and the traditional life are stressed, at the expense of the problems and the new occupations to which the Inuit are adapting. For example, alcohol has destroyed many lives and families but is scarcely mentioned in the text, and then not as a problem, and there is no sign of it or its effects in the photographs. Violence, squalor and in fact any unpleasantness are absent. The author is obviously very well-disposed toward the Inuit, but it is not a kindness to them to disregard the problems they are facing. If these are ignored, the difficulties of transition will not get the understanding they deserve.

The photographs were taken over a period of two years in many northern settlements. Surprisingly there are none from Frobisher where more Inuit live than in any other place in Canada. Most of the photographs are of people, often posed or well aware of the photographer. All are in black and white, sometimes rather dark. This gives a sombre impression which could have been enlivened by the occasional use of colour. Without it photographs of the scenery and lichens and flowers lose much of their appeal.

The text is about a tenth of the book, and consists of extracts from what the Inuit and white residents told the author. They are in the people's words, or in the words of an interpreter, but the quotations are short and can do no more than indicate some of the thoughts of a few northerners. As with the photographs it must have been a matter of selecting from a large number of choices. The result could only be a simplified and personal impression of the North today.

Inuit is essentially a collection of photographs. Few are arresting but many capture some of those aspects and incidents to which life in the North owes its special character, and several of the portraits are striking. It will certainly give pleasure to those who, like the photographer herself, have happy memories of the North and admire its people.

Graham Rowley's long association with Arctic Canada dates back to his exploration and archaeological investigation of the Foxe Basin, 1936-9. Now retired as a scientific advisor to the federal government, he is research professor with the Institute of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, Ottawa.

Publishers' Addresses

For the convenience of readers in remote areas, the addresses of publishers whose books are reviewed in this issue are listed below:

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